THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH

FLIGHT, FEAR OR FANTASY: ABDUCTION PLOTS IN FICTION OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY 1740-1811

KATHERINE J. WRIGHT, BA (HONS), MA

PhD English Literature

The University of Edinburgh

2017

Flight, Fear or Fantasy: Abduction Plots in Fiction of the Eighteenth Century (1740-1811)

Abstract

This thesis brings together eighteenth-century attitudes to the abduction of women portrayed by the law, by newspapers, and in fiction. I focus attention on the interest these different forms of narrative share in scrutinizing women's behaviour and argue that the abduction plot is more important than its status as a stock literary convention would imply. Rather, it is a pliant, complex, and nuanced motif that allows writers the space to explore the difficult and contradictory position of women and attitudes to sexual relations.

This thesis is divided into two parts. The first part comprises two chapters that look at abduction from an historical perspective. The first chapter examines the legal context of abduction as a criminal act and the second chapter examines the social context of 'abduction' as a euphemism for a sexual adventure. This part includes preliminary analysis of abduction plots in Charlotte Smith's *Emmeline, the Orphan of the Castle* (1788) and Ann Radcliffe's *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne: A Highland Story* (1789). The second part comprises three chapters in which I read a range of novels for their abduction plots and scenes. Chapter three focusses on reviewing and on lesser known novels that are not widely read today. It examines the uneasy dialogue between novels and the way they were conveyed to readers. I argue that reviewing presents a discourse of aggression towards women. Chapter four considers abduction plots in domestic fiction focussing on a short story from Eliza Haywood's *The Female Spectator* (1744-46), Samuel Richardson's *The History of Sir Charles Grandison* (1753-54), and Sarah Fielding's *The History of Ophelia* (1760). Chapter five considers the gothic abduction plot in Frances Burney's

Camilla, or a Picture of Youth (1796), Charlotte Smith's *The Young Philosopher* (1798) and Ann Radcliffe's *The Romance of the Forest* (1791).

I take an historicist approach and underpin my analysis of fictional abduction plots with newspaper research that suggests 'abduction' had a meaning in social and cultural discourse that associated it with gossip and innuendo. This research demonstrates that newspapers played an important role in establishing the ambiguity of 'abduction' in the public consciousness. I argue that this journalistic discourse contributed to the suppression of abduction as a violent crime that endangered women.

I suggest that the introduction of comprehensive reviewing created the space for a discourse of aggression to flourish. Many reviews are short, pithy comments criticising a novel as derivative, badly written, and immoral. I argue that a series of reviews appearing on a single page gives the impression that violence towards women is a normal everyday occurrence and abduction is a familiar hazard on the road to domestic felicity.

I conclude that 'abduction' is a porous term in which disparate ideas – sexual aggression, violent crime, and euphemistic social commentary – are held in tension with each other. This tension enables a complex interpretation of what at first appears to be a simple narrative of violent male aggression and female culpability. The ambiguity this tension creates reveals the abduction plot as a versatile motif that challenges the social hierarchy and posits an alternative narrative for women.

Contents

List of illustrations

Declaration

I declare that the composition and contents of this thesis are entirely my own. This thesis has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

Katherine J. Wright

Acknowledgments

I am extremely grateful for the support, intellectual guidance, patience, and encouragement I received from my supervisor, Professor Penny Fielding. I would also like to record my thanks to the late Professor Susan Manning for her insightfulness at an early stage of my work. Finally, I would like to thank my husband whose encouragement and forbearance allowed me the time to read, think, and write.

Introduction

'And is any thing more common, than Ladies being carried, by their Ravishers, into Countries far distant from their own? May not the same Accidents happen to me'. (Charlotte Lennox, *The Female Quixote* (1752)).[1]

[Heroines are] regularly exposed to being forcibly carried off like a Sabine virgin by some frantic admirer. And even if she escaped the terrors of masked ruffians, an insidious ravisher, a cloak wrapped forcibly around her head, and a coach with the blinds up driving she could not conjecture whither, she had still her share of wandering, of poverty, of obloquy, of seclusion, and of imprisonment, and was frequently extended upon a bed of sickness, and reduced to her last shilling before the author condescended to shield her from persecution.
(Walter Scott, Review of *Emma* (*Quarterly Review*, October 1815)).[2]

The heroine of *The Female Quixote* reads novels as 'true-life' narratives and worries that she may be abducted at any moment like the heroines of the romance novels that form her only reading material. Arabella cannot separate life from art, fact from fiction, and she is therefore confused about her social world. Her statement that abduction is commonplace, and Walter Scott's list of the repercussions usually visited upon abducted heroines, encapsulate the theme of my thesis. I argue that the fictional abduction plot should not be dismissed as a stock literary convention but should be explained as an important literary motif that comments on eighteenth-century attitudes towards women.[3]

[1] Charlotte Lennox, *The Female Quixote* (1752), ed. by Amanda Gilroy (London: Penguin Books, 2006), 296.
[2] Quoted in Ioan Williams, ed., *Sir Walter Scott: On Novelists and Fiction* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968), 225-236 (227-228). The quote is from Scott's review of Jane Austen's *Emma*, the heroine of which experiences none of these things.
[3] By 'plot' I mean the events that comprise the 'story'; by 'story' I mean the ordering of events into a coherent narrative, and by 'narrative' I mean the way in which the story is told. So, 'plot' is 'the dynamic shaping force of the narrative discourse' which '*makes* events *into* a story' where characters are the 'vehicles of the action', Peter Brooks, *Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention in Narrative* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 13; 14; 15.

Flight, Fear or Fantasy: Abduction Plots in Fiction of the Eighteenth Century (1740-1811)

Abduction stalks eighteenth-century fiction. The reader is likely to encounter it in novels that offer a recognisable representation of social reality as well as those that offer something more fantastic. The rigours that Scott enumerated for the heroine enmeshed in an abduction ordeal occur in complex novels of psychological realism, such as Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa, or The History of a Young Lady* (1747-48); in simplistic novels by lesser-known writers such as Mrs Woodfin's *The Auction* (1760), and in sensational gothic romances such as Ann Radcliffe's *The Romance of the Forest* (1791). Scott described the dreadful consequences likely to be the lot of the abducted heroine. Abduction is a violent act usually (but not always) carried out as a prelude to sexual assault by men who use passion incited by female innocence as an excuse. The victim normally escapes but escape is rarely sufficient for survival. First, she must be chastened by her experience, deprived of every external comfort, and reduced to penury before she can re-enter the social world to become a suitable wife for the hero.

Scott's explication of the abduction plot suggests that abduction is survivable but at an extreme cost to the innocent victim. Its function would seem to be moral instruction rather than a warning that being carried off by a 'frantic admirer' could be a true-life hazard. Scott observed that fictional heroines were abducted with such regularity that readers readily recognised the features of the abduction plot as figurative and not the stuff of real life. The reader, he argued, 'became familiar with the land of fiction, the adventures of which he assimilated not with those of real life, but with each other'.[4]

[4] Quoted in Williams, 228.

Whilst Scott stated that no-one confused fact and fiction, I suggest that there is a more entwined relationship between abduction as a true-life experience and the abduction plot as a narrative device. I do this by exploring the concept of 'abduction' through an interrogation of its legal and social contexts represented by legal digests and news reports of missing women. I show that 'abduction' had a legal meaning as a criminal act and that it also had meaning in social discourse as a euphemism to disguise female sexual behaviour outwith marriage. This latter meaning complicates the perception of abduction as a criminal act by overlaying the crime with a less well-defined social meaning. I apply these legal and social contexts to novels from mid to late eighteenth century to illustrate the way in which writers employ the abduction plot to explore gender relations in a patriarchal society.

Eighteenth-century writers employ the abduction plot in imaginative ways. For example, each of Richardson's novels feature a heroine abducted by sexually aggressive aristocrats in climatic scenes that are pivotal to the plot. The heroines of Gothic novels are in constant danger of being spirited away to gloomy castles and incarcerated in dungeons or in isolated towers to await rescue by a noble lover or to engineer her own daring escape. Abduction is a pliant motif. It may be violent, such as in Charlotte Smith's *Emmeline, the Orphan of the Castle* (1788), where the titular heroine is forced into a carriage by her emotionally unstable lover. It may be achieved by deception, such as in the elaborate strategies planned by Bellamy to abduct Eugenia in Frances Burney's *Camilla or a Picture of Youth* (1796). It is this diversity that makes the abduction plot a rich field for literary discussion.

If we look closer at these last two examples, we can see the versatility in the abduction plot. Emmeline's abduction is motivated by sexual desire but Eugenia is deformed and disfigured by smallpox. Her abduction is not sexually motivated. Rather, Eugenia's attraction is her fortune and her abduction is motivated by avarice. My thesis discusses these two motivations in detail. I relate the former with the cultural attitude that women must be exemplary to avoid becoming the victim of a sexually motivated crime and the latter to the legal context of abduction that associates the crime with financial value. I argue that the abduction plot explores contemporary attitudes towards abduction as a crime against women and the cultural attitude that women could be responsible for the sexual aggression of men.

I also consider the abduction plot as a means to reveal women's dissatisfaction with their role in the social hierarchy. Sarah Fielding's novel, *The History of Ophelia* (1760), is an example of this attitude. In this novel, the titular heroine manipulates her situation as an abductee and emerges with a spectacular rise in social position from obscure poverty to aristocratic rank and wealth. Finally, I consider the abduction plot as a means to make female resilience in adversity visible, such as in Charlotte Smith's *The Young Philosopher* (1798). In this novel both heroines survive abduction through steadfastness in the face of evil intentions, including terrifying gothic surroundings and supposed supernatural events.

Eighteenth-century villains regularly carry off their victims in a range of situations that may be violent or involve complex deception strategies to satisfy a sexual appetite or to take possession of a fortune. Seduction is often the common element. Provided the heroine has been carried off against her will, her abduction

witnessed, and she is speedily rescued or escapes, then she would be ensured a happy ending. Indeed, despite the overlap between abduction and seduction, a significant difference is the heroine's survival of the former with an unsullied reputation. But even exemplary heroines can be accused of complicity. The most famous example of which is Clarissa Harlowe's abduction by Lovelace. A heroine's culpability, no matter how exemplary her behaviour, can be suspected. It is this suspicion that my thesis unpicks.

Many scholars have addressed the ideas on which this thesis is based: the fictionalisation of legal principles, the relationship between fact and fiction, and the close affinity between conduct book ideology and novels that aim to inculcate modest behaviour in women. I agree with the view expressed by scholars such as Kate Ellis that gothic romance novels, in which women face adversity and survive, challenge the patriarchal view of women as intellectually weak, emotionally unstable, and in need of protection. I refer to many of these studies in the course of my discussion. However, the central concern of my thesis is the abduction plot itself and I address this first.

Abduction plots and scenes occur in so many novels that they have been described as 'hardly more than a literary convention'.[5] I suggest that this pervasiveness should not be interpreted as implying that the abduction plot represents a commonplace adventure. Rather, I argue that it is a nuanced and complex narrative device that heroines survive with their reputations intact through

[5] Patricia Meyer Spacks, *Desire and Truth: Functions of Plot in Eighteenth-Century English Novels* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 190.

resolute action and ingenuity. In doing so, I suggest that the abduction motif raises questions about a woman's role in the social hierarchy and, in particular, that the abduction plot in Gothic fiction posits an alternative narrative for women.

Consider the following abduction scenes from three different novels. The context in which each abduction occurs, and its outcome, differ but each example is governed by patriarchy as a gendered ideology. The first scene implies that a woman can survive abduction provided she is not seduced; the second illustrates female powerlessness when confronted with male aggression, and the last depicts female agency as a fantasy in which the heroine takes charge of her own destiny and defeats the sexually threatening male:

> On stepping into the coach, Miss Betsy directed the man where to drive; but the gentleman, unheard by her, ordered him to go to the bagnio in Orange-street. – They were no sooner seated, and the windows drawn up […] than Miss Betsy was alarmed with a treatment, which her want of consideration made her little expect […] she struggled, – she repelled with all her might, the insolent pressures of his lips and hands. – "Is this," cried she, "the honour I was to depend upon? […] "Accuse me not," said he […] I will make you a handsome present before we part, and if you can be constant will allow you six guineas a week." (Eliza Haywood, *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* (1751))[6]

> Catherine looked round and saw Miss Tilney leaning on her brother's arm […] "Stop, stop, Mr. Thorpe," she impatiently cried, "it is Miss Tilney; it is indeed.—How could you tell me they were gone? – Stop, stop, I will get out this moment and go to them." But to what purpose did she speak?—Thorpe only lashed his horse into a brisker trot; […] "Pray, pray stop, Mr. Thorpe.—I cannot go on.—I will not go on.—I must go back to Miss Tilney." But Mr. Thorpe only laughed, smacked his whip, encouraged his horse, made odd noises, and drove on; and Catherine, angry and vexed as she was, having no power of getting away, was obliged to give up the point and submit. (Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey* (1817))[7]

[6] Eliza Haywood, *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* (1751), ed. by Christine Blouch (Ontario: Broadview Press, 1998), 239.
[7] Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey, Lady Susan, The Watsons, Sanditon*, ed. by James Kinsley and John Davie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003; reissued 2008), 62. The novel was written between 1798-1803 and published in 1817.

> "Let us immediately return to the straight one then," said Laura. "My father will be alarmed, and conclude that some accident has happened to us." "Surely, my charming Miss Montreville," said Warren, […] "you do not fear to trust yourself with me." "Fear *you*!" repeated Laura, with involuntary disdain. "No, but I am at a loss to guess what has encouraged you to make me the companion of so silly a frolic".
>
> […]
>
> Laura now rose from her seat, and seizing the reins with a force that made the horses rear, she coolly chose that moment to spring from the curricle; and walked back towards the town, leaving her inamorato in the utmost astonishment at her self-possession, as well as rage at her disdainful treatment. (Mary Brunton, *Self-Control* (1811))[8]

In the first scene, the young and innocent heroine is abducted because her male companion assumes her to be sexually available. This scene is one of many in Eliza Haywood's *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* in which the heroine is embroiled in a sexual adventure. The *Monthly Review* disparaged the novel as 'a continued string of meer narrative' in which 'Adventures thick sown, and amorous intrigues carried on by a numerous variety of persons (with but little variety of characters) compose all that the reader will find in these four volumes'.[9] Today scholars take a different view. I agree with Paula R. Backscheider's argument that this abduction scene portrays the double standard endemic in eighteenth-century society that insisted on women being chaste but tolerated prostitution. Backscheider describes the novel as a blend of 'formulaic fantasy' and 'social realism' that

[8] Mary Brunton, *Self-Control* (1811), ed. by Anthony Mandal (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2014), 94. Sarah W. R. Smith points out that this scene is 'a reversal' of the male dominated kidnap scene, 'Men, Women, and Money: The case of Mary Brunton', in *Fetter'd or Free? British Women Novelists 1670-1815*, ed. by Mary Anne Schofield and Cecila Macheski (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1986), 40-58 (47).

[9] G., 'Book Review', *The Monthly Review, Or, New Literary Journal, 1750-1751*, 5 (October, 1751), 393-394 (394). All book reviews have been extracted from the online database, *British Periodicals*, unless otherwise stated.

provides the reader with 'a symbolic portrait of the power structure […], a London setting with rich, veridical details of the present, and a glimpse of a different society representing a new order'.[10]

Contemporaries knew Haywood as a writer of scandalous narratives but *Betsy Thoughtless* is different in form and function from her previous works and was viewed by eighteenth-century commentators as representing her moral conversion. Clara Reeve described it as a novel of moral instruction that recovered Haywood's 'lost reputation'.[11] Today scholars question that contemporary view and suggest that Haywood's change in writing style may have been related to her need for her work to be financially successful rather than a change in her moral outlook. Scholars suggest that Haywood overlaid her amatory fiction with moral instruction as a means to align herself with the new species of writing promoted by Samuel Richardson: 'This astute professional further confirmed her reformation when she excluded salacious detail from her later novels.'[12]

---

[10] Paula R. Backscheider, 'The Story of Eliza Haywood's Novels: Caveats and Questions', in *The Passionate Fictions of Eliza Haywood: Essays on Her Life and Work*, ed. by Kirsten T. Saxton and Rebecca P. Bocchicchio (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2000), 19-47 (28).
[11] Clara Reeve, *The progress of romance,* in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online,* 2 vols (Colchester, 1785), I:121.
[12] Cheryl Turner, *Living by the Pen: Women Writers in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 1992), 52. This argument is also made by J. Paul Hunter, 'The Novel and Social/Cultural History', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Eighteenth-Century Novel*, ed. by John Richetti (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996; repr. 1998), 9-40. Scholars also suggest that the text is overtly erotic. For example, David Oakleaf argues that it is a highly erotic novel which 'probably qualifies as pornography', 'Circulating the Name of a Whore: Eliza Haywood's Betsy Thoughtless, Betty Careless and the Duplicates of the Double Standard', *Women's Writing*, 15.1 (May 2008), 107-134 (108). Essays that discuss Haywood's change in narrative style can be found in Saxton and Bocchicchio, *The Passionate Fictions of Eliza Haywood*, in particular Paula R. Backscheider's 'The Story of Eliza Haywood's Novels: Caveats and Questions', 19-47 and John Richetti's 'Histories by Eliza Haywood and Henry Fielding: Imitation and Adaptation', 240-258.

Backscheider's argument that *Betsy Thoughtless* can be interpreted as positing an alternative social order can also be applied to the scene from *Northanger Abbey*. Claudia L. Johnson argues that Austen's 'mock-gothic' novel 'juxtapose the "alarms of romance" to the "anxieties of common life" in order to enable us to see their interdependence'.[13] She argues that it is the reader that perceives *Northanger Abbey* as a gothic novel and Catherine as a gothic heroine: 'it is we who perceive that John Thorpe's determination to force her on a carriage ride is a variant on countless gothic abduction scenes'.[14] Johnson describes Thorpe's abduction of Catherine as depicting 'rampant' bullying and argues that the 'moral and physical coercion of powerless females which figures so predominantly in gothic fiction is here transposed to the daytime world of drawing room manners, where it can be shown for the everyday occurrence it is'.[15] Thorpe bullies Catherine who submits but with extreme annoyance. This abduction scene is illustrative of female subjugation by men who assume authority despite their obvious unfitness for the role.

Austen's scene has a parallel in Mary Brunton's novel, *Self-Control* (1811). However, the heroine does not submit to flawed male authority. Rather, she upbraids her abductor for his audacity in attempting to carry her off. Brunton stated that one of her main aims was to 'shew the power of the religious principle in bestowing self-command'.[16] The novel, therefore, has an evangelical purpose. So, when Brunton's

[13] Claudia L. Johnson, Introduction to *Northanger Abbey*, vii-xxxiv (xv).
[14] Ibid, xxii.
[15] Claudia L. Johnson, *Jane Austen: Women, Politics and the Novel* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 36; 37.
[16] Quote from the memoir of Mary Brunton's life, *Emmeline with some other Pieces: Mary Brunton*, British Women Novelists 1750-1850 (London: Routledge/Theommes Press, 1992; rept of 1819 edition), xlii.

heroine is forced to take a carriage ride by Warren, a licentious admirer, she does not reluctantly acquiesce to her tormentor. Instead, she takes control, grasps the reins, and takes a leap of faith from a moving carriage.

Brunton's novel is better known for its elaborate abduction scene in which the heroine is carried off to a cabin in the middle of a forest in North America and from which she escapes by floating down a river in a canoe. That scene overshadows Warren's more mundane abduction. Indeed, the *Critical Review* referred to Warren's abduction attempt as one event amongst many that are 'dull, common matter of fact stuff', implying that there was nothing particularly exciting in the story of a pious young women being carried off by a libertine.[17] The *British Critic*'s piece also implied that Warren's abduction of Laura was a familiar stock motif: 'she was constantly exposed to the snares laid for her by licentious young men of fortune'.[18] However, like the North American adventure, this conventional abduction, also requires a miraculous escape as Laura walks away uninjured from her jump out of the carriage. The scene suggests that powerlessness is a state of mind rather than a physical barrier. Claudia Johnson points out that whilst Brunton's heroine 'appears to be the very model of repressive female modesty' she is fully prepared to stand up for herself 'when anyone attempts to wrest her *self*-control from her hands'.[19]

These three very different abduction scenes illustrate the diversity of abduction as a literary motif and show how it can be utilised to question a woman's

[17] 'Art.V' Self Controul, a Novel, 2 vols, *The Critical Review, or Annals of Literature*, 24.2 (October, 1811), 160-169 (165).
[18] 'Book Review', *The British Critic, 1793-1826*, 38 (September, 1811), 213-220 (215).
[19] Claudia L. Johnson, *Women, Politics and the Novel*, 21.

position in society. I build on these arguments to suggest that the abduction plot can be interpreted as a means to explore gender relations and as such it should not be dismissed as a stock literary convention but should be explained as one. I suggest that abduction makes visible and questions the subjugation of women in the social hierarchy.

I explore the support the justice system and the press provide for this patriarchal narrative of male authority and female subjugation. Patriarchy as the 'natural order' of society is important to my argument that abduction plots either reinforce or challenge that ideology. I make the distinction by reading abduction plots as either moral lessons or as opportunities for female agency.

My thesis focusses on abduction as a crime against women and only touches on male victims where they are feminized by the language used to describe their ordeal. Men are victims of abduction too but not as a result of culturally imposed vulnerability. For example, a scene from *Betsy Thoughtless* involves the abduction of the heroine's suitor by his father, not because he is vulnerable but because he is defiant: 'he seemed very unwilling, […]. I listened to none of his excuses, nor trusted him out of my sight, but forced him to go with me to the coach, in which I had secured a couple of places'.[20] In the course of my research, I found other examples of male abduction. For example, Francis Lathom's *The Midnight Bell* (1798) in which the abuse of power exercised by the state is the principal theme. In Lathom's novel male victims are abducted and sold into slavery or imprisoned in the Bastille.

[20] *Betsy Thoughtless*, 53-54. The heroine reacts with indifference to the loss of her lover, 'She soon grew weary, however, of troubling herself about the matter, and a very few days served to make her lose even the memory of it', 55.

However, the function of the abduction plot in the context of the misuse of State power to achieve political gain is worthy of a study of its own.

This thesis is divided into two parts. The first part comprises two chapters that examine the legal (chapter one) and social (chapter two) contexts of 'abduction' from an historical perspective. It includes preliminary analysis of the abduction plot in two novels from the late 1780s. In this first part, I provide the cultural and historical background for the fictional abduction plots that I analyse in detail in the second part. The second part comprises three chapters in which I read novels for their abduction plots and scenes to consider the light they shed on the function of the abduction plot in relation to a woman's role in society. Chapter three begins this process by looking at literary reviews and their influence on the abduction plot as a narrative of aggression. Chapter four considers the abduction plot in domestic fiction (by which I mean fiction that is recognisable as a mimetic representation of contemporary social life) and chapter five considers the abduction plot in gothic romance fiction. I compare and contrast the abduction plots of three novels from 1744 to1760 in chapter four and from 1791 to 1798 in chapter five.

The first chapter, 'Abduction and the law', discusses the complex legal landscape associated with abduction as a crime. I argue that it is difficult to distinguish between abduction and consensual elopement in the eighteenth-century historical record because abduction is not a single crime but is associated with multiple criminal activities. I suggest that the historical record documents abducted women being exposed to violent crime without access to legal redress. I show how news reports obscure women's vulnerability to violent crime by conflating abduction

and consensual elopement, often to the detriment of the women involved. I argue that news reports that conflate abduction with elopement disguise the historical incidence of violence towards women. I consider the effect of the 1753 Marriage Act on abduction as a crime and argue that one of the Act's main purposes was to prevent abduction through criminalising irregular marriage.

I then illustrate the fictionalisation of abduction as a legal concept taking as my preliminary text, Ann Radcliffe's *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne: A Highland Story* (1789). I argue that Radcliffe's embryonic gothic romance is thoughtful about abduction and its effect on a woman's life. I suggest that the literary convention of the exemplary woman fictionalises the contradiction that abduction law requires a woman to be non-complicit and the cultural expectation that her behaviour conform to strict standards of modesty.

The second chapter, 'Abduction as a euphemism: scandal and criminality', argues that beyond the legal context of abduction there is an awareness that it can be a euphemism – a convenient excuse to preserve a reputation and a means to disguise the true reason for a prolonged and unexplained absence. These reasons might include hiding a sexual intrigue, abortion, or to give birth privately. I argue that this shifting territory between the legal and social contexts make 'abduction' difficult to define.

The social and cultural contexts of 'abduction' can be discerned in eighteenth-century journalistic discourse in which missing women are regularly associated with gossip and innuendo. Newspapers are a rich source of historical incidents of abduction. I unpack the language used in pieces about missing women to argue that

news reports of elopement often disguise violent abduction. I draw a distinction between pieces that describe what appear to be cases of abduction and those where reports of abduction may be disguising something else. I show that news reports are intertextual references to the abduction motif in fiction. I argue that fictional abduction plots and scenes build on a shared understanding between writers and readers. This shared understanding is facilitated by newspaper pieces about young women and their attraction to unscrupulous men that familiarises 'abduction' as a common hazard and normalises an otherwise dangerous situation. I illustrate my argument with the multiple abduction scenes in Charlotte Smith's *Emmeline, the Orphan of the Castle*.

The second part of my thesis comprises three chapters that address the abduction motif in fiction. Chapter three, 'Abduction: 'The Vilest of Plots': the importance of reviews', argues that literary reviews are critical of abduction plots and scenes in novels. Literary reviewing is in its infancy in the eighteenth century and there is little distinction between writers, booksellers, and reviewers. The length and type of review a novel attracted varies enormously and can be either a short caustic comment, a succinct distillation of the plot, or a long extract with little commentary. Some magazines review a number of novels on a single page and I argue that this editorial policy creates a discourse of aggression towards women. It is a commonplace to observe that the abduction plot is associated with violence. I argue that the language used in reviews implies judgements about a heroine's complicity in being carried off that can be different in degree from that narrated in the novel. I suggest that the vocabulary of violence in reviews can lead to a reinterpretation of

the abduction plot so that female agency – such as the ability of the heroine to engineer her own escape – is suppressed. Furthermore, I argue that the compression of plots in reviews emphasises an insidious relationship between abduction and contexts such as deception, theft, and financial greed. In some cases, the compressed plot interprets such contexts as of greater importance than is supported by the text of the novel. This chapter aims to show that 'abduction' is a term laden with nuances and constructed by context. I explore these issues in novels that are not widely read today as well as in the most famous abduction/elopement controversy of eighteenth-century fiction, Clarissa's abduction by Lovelace. I focus on Albrecht von Haller's review of *Clarissa* that highlights contemporary concerns about an exemplary heroine's culpability for her abduction.

Chapter four, 'Abduction and domestic fiction: a lesson in modesty', continues my argument that abduction is a fluid category that resists stable definition. I build on my argument that 'abduction' is fictionalised as a familiar hazard and is acknowledged as a consequence of women's failure to regulate their behaviour. The cultural attitude that women should be responsible for inciting violent passion in men is a recurring plot in eighteenth-century domestic fiction. I argue that such fiction encourages the invisibility of abduction as a crime by condoning the idea of female culpability. I take as my texts a short story from Eliza Haywood's periodical *The Female Spectator* (1744-46), the abduction plot in the first volume of Samuel Richardson's *The History of Sir Charles Grandison* (1753-54), and the abduction scenes in Sarah Fielding's *The History of Ophelia* (1760), to suggest that each illustrates the consequence of female agency in very different ways. In the first two

texts I argue that female agency results in a reaffirmation of the culpability of women in a society where men are considered to be naturally authoritative. I then argue, by way of contrast, that Fielding's novel challenges this narrative of culpability by questioning the ideology of male hegemony. This argument is aligned with that of Patricia Meyer Spacks and Eve Tavor Bannet that women manipulate domestic ideology to redefine cultural beliefs about their role in society. I suggest that Fielding's novel looks ahead to a new narrative for gender relations.

My fifth and last chapter, 'The gothic abduction plot: resolution in adversity', elaborates my argument that the abduction plot can be interpreted to reveal female agency that challenges the ideology that women benefit from male authority. I argue that the gothic abduction plot functions as a framework for exposing and challenging the perception of women as naturally subordinate and compromised by their emotions. I argue that it provides space for writers to depict women responding to adversity with confidence and ingenuity. I suggest that the gothic abduction plot should be explained as a significant literary device and not dismissed as the 'usual furniture of modern romances'.[21] I take as my texts Ann Radcliffe's *The Romance of the Forest* (1791), Frances Burney's *Camilla or a Picture of Youth* (1796), and Charlotte Smith's *The Young Philosopher* (1798). I argue that the gothic abduction plot in the hybrid novels of Burney and Smith explores the idea that the proper response to male aggression should be passive forbearance. I then argue, by way of contrast, that the abduction plot in Radcliffe's novel challenges that assumption. I

[21] 'The Count De Santerre: A Romance', *The Critical Review: Or, Annals of Literature*, 21 (November, 1797), 354.

suggest that the abduction plot and scenes in *Camilla* and in *The Young Philosopher* foreground women's discontent with their role in the social hierarchy whilst Radcliffe's novel posits an alternative narrative that seeks to challenge women's social and cultural role.

A prominent feature of my thesis is the interaction between fiction and journalistic discourse. I interrogate news reports and advertisements to point to correlations between abduction plots in fiction and the historical incidence of the abduction of women. My argument for doing so rests on the relationship between the newspaper and the novel. Jill Campbell looks specifically at newspaper advertisements in her essay, 'Domestic Intelligence: Newspaper Advertising and the Eighteenth-Century Novel'. She argues that there is an interaction, rather than a formative relationship, between newspaper advertisements and novels: 'The formal realism of the early English novel, however, looks like a less specialized and strictly literary technique when its likeness to features of an apparently separate medium, the language of advertising copy, is observed.'[22] Campbell suggests that both contribute to readers' and writers' understanding of society but that they did not grow out of, nor can be explained by, each other. She suggests that advertisements represent a form of commercial exchange in an increasingly commercialised world. My discussion of the abduction case against Richard Perry (1791-94) and the news reports speculating about the motivation for his actions links to this argument and offers a commentary on the commercialisation of marriage as a business transaction.

[22] Jill Campbell, 'Domestic Intelligence: Newspaper Advertising and the Eighteenth-Century Novel', *The Yale Journal of Criticism,* 15.2 (2002), 251-291 (254).

However, the broader argument about the formative nature of the relationship between newspapers and novels is also relevant to my argument that reports of missing women influenced writers' use of the abduction motif. There have been numerous studies on the relationship between newspapers and fiction.[23] Lennard J. Davis, for example, argues in *Factual Fictions: The Origins of the English Novel*, that narrative fiction arose out of the same discourse as news and journalism and suggests that novels are a response to the restrictions imposed on journalism by statute and government policy. Doug Underwood argues that fiction is a means to disguise political argument in *Journalism and the Novel: Truth and Fiction 1700-2000* and points to eighteenth-century writers who worked in both mediums, such as Daniel Defoe and Henry Fielding. Underwood observes that: 'Few citizens of eighteenth-century England looked to newspapers for a balanced perspective or dispassionate discussion of the issues.'[24] Morris Golden gave examples of the direct influence of newspapers on Samuel Richardson's novels in his essays 'Public Context and Imagining Self in "Clarissa"' and 'Public Context and Imagining Self in "Sir Charles Grandison"'.

The politicisation of narrative fiction is an argument made by Michael McKeon in his seminal work, *The Origins of the English Novel 1600-1740*. McKeon's complex argument traces the epistemology of news and the claims made about the relationship between news and historicity. McKeon argues that the novel

[23] Ian Watt discusses the relationship between periodicals, such as the *Tatler*, the *Spectator* and the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and novels rather than newspapers, 'The periodical essay did much in forming a taste that the novel, too could cater for', *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1957, repr. London: Pimlico, 2000), 51.
[24] Doug Underwood, *Journalism and the Novel: Truth and Fiction 1700-2000* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 48.

arose from romance novels of the seventeenth-century rather than from newspaper and journalistic discourse. He points out that the differentiation between news as a 'significant if ambiguous conceptual category' and journalism 'as a popular if eclectic professional activity' developed over the seventeenth century.[25] He argues that newspapers and journalism should not 'bear the full weight of the origins of the novel'.[26] McKeon refines this distinction in the fact/fiction discourse as the division between 'material, historical, and scientific truth' and 'spiritual and moral truth'.[27] Thus the novel is concerned with morality and morality should not be confused with the factual discourse of newspapers. I argue that the conflation of abduction with elopement in eighteenth-century journalistic discourse allows a woman's sudden disappearance to be reported as scandalous gossip in the context of legitimate public interest and newsworthy information.

Many eighteenth-century novels mix fact and fiction in narratives that offer a commentary on contemporary society. Toni Bowers argues in *Force or Fraud: British Seduction Stories and the Problem of Resistance: 1660-1760*, that Richardson's political views (amongst other writers with Tory political leanings) coalesce around the concept of '*imagining virtuous resistance to authority*' and that his novels explore this political viewpoint.[28] Bowers argues that Richardson's seduction plots rationalise Tory unease with the outcome of the Glorious Revolution.

---

[25] Michael McKeon, *The Origins of the English Novel 1600-1740* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), 46.
[26] McKeon, *The Origins of the English Novel*, 50. McKeon argues that the novel arose from the romance fictions of the past rather than from news discourse, as argued by Davis.
[27] Michael McKeon, 'Review of *Factual Fictions: The Origins of the English Novel* by Lennard J. Davis', *Modern Philology*, 1.82 (August 1984), 76-86 (86).
[28] Toni Bowers, *Force or Fraud: British Seduction Stories and the problem of Resistance 1660-1760* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 7.

She focuses on the 'extraordinary amount of attention' Richardson gives to the elopement/abduction scene in *Clarissa* and argues that 'Clarissa's resistance is carefully delineated as virtuous, though she is explicitly not without complicity.'[29]

Bowers' text focuses on seduction and rape as competing narratives. My thesis discusses abduction and elopement as competing narratives. I argue that the abduction plot is an opportunity for writers to posit a new narrative for gender relations in which women assert some control over their lives through demonstrating female agency, such as 'virtuous resistance' to male aggression. I suggest that morality is a discrete element of fictional abduction plots so that the heroine's complicity or culpability is the defining factor in whether she survives her ordeal without reputational damage or is condemned to a life of obscurity and poverty. I suggest that being carried off by a villain traverses the axis that has culpability at one end and resolute action at the other, with various shades of complicity and resistance operating in between. The extreme positions can be found respectively in novels that claim verisimilitude, such as Richardson's *The History of Sir Charles Grandison*, and those in which a socially realist structure is interwoven with a discourse of fantasy and romance, such as Radcliffe's *The Romance of the Forest*.

Women-centred studies that argue for the central place of women as writers and readers, such as Catherine Gallagher's *Nobody's Story: The Vanishing Acts of Women Writers in the Marketplace 1670-1820* and Margaret Anne Doody's *The True Story of the Novel*, are important to my reading of abduction plots and scenes. Gallagher argues that readers sympathised with wholly invented characters in novels:

[29] Ibid, 277; 249.

'A story about nobody was nobody's story and hence could be entered, occupied, identified with by anybody.'[30] Gallagher explains that fictional characters, therefore, became 'universally preferred' to those that could be historically referenced, such as those in the scandal fictions of Delarivier Manley.[31] Gallagher argues that the greater the realistic detail, the more readers could be assured that the character is wholly fictional so that the 'very realism of the new form, therefore, enabled readers to appropriate the stories sympathetically'.[32] She added a further perspective to arguments about the origin of the novel by suggesting that realist fiction developed in competition with the allegorical and scandalous texts of Aphra Behn and Manley.

Doody argues that one of the 'interests of the new Realism' in novels (that is novels post-1752) is 'that bad women be punished'.[33] She argues that 'New Realism, […] takes a renewed interest in monitoring female chastity' and notes the 'enormous rise in female mortality' in 'eighteenth- and nineteenth-century realistic novels'.[34] My thesis links to these arguments by suggesting that the abduction plot functions both as a moral lesson about a woman's responsibility for the sexual aggression of men and as a challenge to that ideology.

My argument also rests on the body of scholarship that explores print culture, in particular, access to newspapers, magazines, and novels. I do not attempt to replicate the historical arena in which individual readers experienced the novels I

[30] Catherine Gallagher, *Nobody's Story: The Vanishing Acts of Women Writers in the Marketplace, 1670-1820* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 168.
[31] Ibid, 172.
[32] Ibid, 174.
[33] Margaret Anne Doody, *The True Story of the Novel* (New Brunswick, N.J: Rutgers University Press, 1996), 290.
[34] Ibid.

discuss. To do so would require minute historical particularity that is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, I explore the historical response to abduction plots through journalistic discourse in newspapers and through professional commentary in review journals.

There are many studies of primary resources that assess literacy rates, the size of the reading public, what was read, how and where people read, and whether differences can be discerned by reference to the reader's gender or social class.[35] Scholars suggest that reading was not necessarily a solitary pastime and that the eighteenth-century habit of consuming novels in groups implies that many more people had access to novels than estimates of literacy rates suggest.

My argument links to the scholarship that focusses on the way in which readers respond to novels. There are many studies about why people read novels. For example, William Warner argues in *Licensing Entertainment: The Elevation of Novel Reading in Britain: 1684-1750* that people read for enjoyment and that the expansion of such reading between 1684 and 1750 was driven by access to money, 'economically enfranchised readers', and formula fiction.[36] Nancy Armstrong considers the relationship that developed over the eighteenth century between conduct books and fiction in *Desire and Domestic Fiction, A Political History of the*

[35] The studies I consulted include: William St. Clair, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004; rept, 2005); Jacqueline Pearson, *Women's Reading in Britain 1750-1835: A dangerous recreation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); David Allan, *Making British Culture: English Readers and the Scottish Enlightenment 1740-1830* (London: Routledge, 2008), and Christopher Flint, 'The Eighteenth-Century Novel and Print Culture: A Proposed Modesty', in *A Companion to the Eighteenth-Century English Novel and Culture*, ed. by Paula R. Backscheider and Catherine Ingrassia (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 343-364. These works discuss the many factors about how and what people read.

[36] William B. Warner, *Licensing Entertainment: The Elevation of Novel Reading in Britain: 1684-1750* (London: University of California Press, 1998), 278-279.

Novel. She argues that by the end of the eighteenth century, 'Some novels even conformed to the conduct book's criteria for educational reading, while others provided the means of regulating leisure time.'[37] Richard D. Altick, *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public 1800-1900,* suggests that by the end of the century the impetus for reading was a thirst for 'information and guidance in everyday affairs'.[38] William St. Clair's study, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period*, provides evidence that the audience for novels widened between 1790 to 1830:

> The huge changes in book production and book reading which followed the invention of circulating libraries in the 1750s, the abolition of perpetual copyright in 1774, the start of many book clubs in the 1770s and later, and the consequent collectivisation of the reading of newly written books were as much driven by publishers and local enthusiasts as by authors or by readers.[39]

Studies of the rise of libraries and the purchasing habits of book clubs sheds light on these reading habits. David Allan interrogates an extensive range of primary sources in *A Nation of Readers: The Lending Library in Georgian England* and argues that libraries and book reading in eighteenth-century England was a socially inclusive activity. He suggests that organised book lending contributed to social and cultural improvements. My thesis explores this intersection between history and literature. David Allan also points out in *Commonplace Books and Reading in Georgian England* that newspapers, magazines, and journals were 'standard fare' for

[37] Nancy Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction, A Political History of the Novel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987; repr. 1989), 106.
[38] Richard D. Altick, *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public 1800-1900* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), 45.
[39] St. Clair, 264.

book clubs and libraries.[40] This mixture of reading habits interweaves fact and fiction, newspapers and novels, and is epitomised by Walter Scott's exclamation that *Clarissa* contains 'many improbabilities' including Clarissa's disappearance which, in his day, he suggests would not have remained secret because 'the whole story of the elopement would have flown on the wings of the newspapers'.[41]

Jan Fergus's study, *Provincial Readers in Eighteenth-Century England*, looks at reading from the point of view of demand and the difference that gender, age, and social class make in book reading outside London. She observes that whilst women 'were just as likely as men to subscribe to a magazine' they were 'nearly three times as likely to withdraw or purchase a novel'.[42] She points out that professional men, tradesmen, and male servants all read Richardson's novels. Fergus argues that in some cases, 'men could outnumber women readers' of novels and that therefore conduct book ideology that 'deplored' novel reading by women should be treated with caution.[43] Thus it is important not to lose sight of the fact that women may not have been the main consumers of domestic fiction. This diversity in the readership of novels and their popularity with male readers links to my argument that the abduction plot is a nuanced and complex narrative device that both reinforces and challenges patriarchal society.

---

[40] David Allan, *Commonplace Books and Reading in Georgian England, Cambridge Books Online* (Cambridge University Press, 2010), 15.
[41] Sir Walter Scott, 'Samuel Richardson', *Lives of the Novelists*, ed. by Ernest Rhys (London: J. M. Dent, 1928), 1-45 (24).
[42] Jan Fergus, *Provincial Readers in Eighteenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 50.
[43] Ibid, 73.

Fergus's research shows that the parts of a multi-volume novel were not always read consecutively and that readers did not always read each volume in a series. For example, seventeen customers read only up to the second volume of Richardson's *Sir Charles Grandison*. Thus Harriet's abduction would have been a prominent plot line in such a reading. Furthermore, Fergus observes that novels were not major acquisitions amongst the book clubs in her study. She notes that *Camilla,* for example, was bought by only two book clubs. Nine novels were purchased by book clubs between 1786 and 1789, twenty-four novels between 1790 and 1799, and thirteen between 1800 and 1806.[44] This implies that book clubs purchased a significant amount of non-fiction, which would suggest that they encouraged reading for information as well as for entertainment.[45]

As already noted, the discourse of newspapers and novels intersect so that the social realism of novels by Richardson and Smith, for example, mirrors the journalistic discourse of daily newspapers consumed by men and women of all social classes. My exploration of newspaper pieces about abduction and elopement leans heavily on the scholarship that discusses the popularity and social diversity of newspaper readership. Uriel Hyde's *Reading Newspapers: press and public in eighteenth- century Britain and America*, Hannah Barker's *Newspapers, Politics and English Society 1695-1855,* and Bob Clarke's *From Grub Street to Fleet Street: An Illustrated History of English Newspapers to 1899* provide quantitative and qualitative research on the range and popularity of newspapers that underpins my

[44] Fergus, 57.
[45] David Allan argues that book clubs enabled 'unprecedented' access to newspapers, journals and magazines, *Commonplace Books and Reading in Georgian England*, 15.

argument. Figures 1 and 2 show women reading newspapers in different settings but as a communal, rather than a solitary, activity.

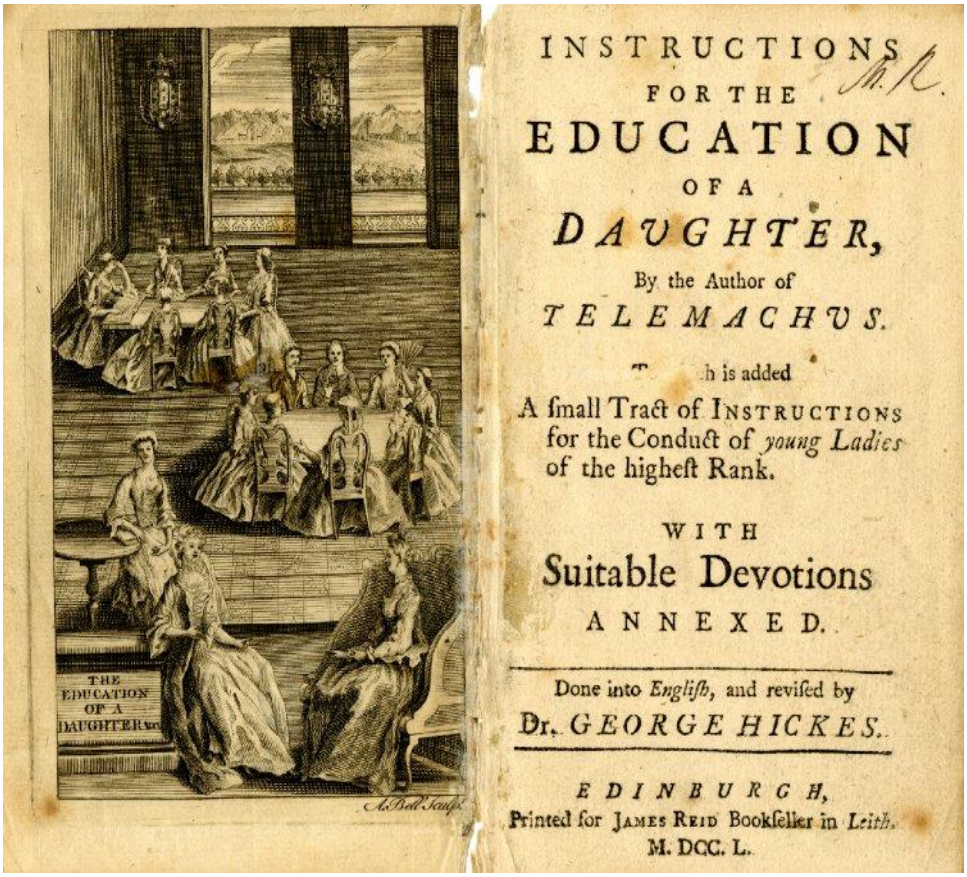


Figure 1: Interior with women grouped together, one group listening to one reading a newspaper, the others to a cleric, and three in the foreground, one sitting with a book, the others talking; 1750.[46]

[46] @ Trustees of the British Museum. Registration number: 1895,1031.280.

Figure 2: The Happy News: Two women reading from a newspaper headed 'America 1778'; 1778.[47]

Finally, I touch on the use of language in the eighteenth century. I draw on the first edition of Samuel Johnson's dictionary (1755) for the meaning of various terms that describe abduction and elopement. We know that the meaning of words in the eighteenth-century vocabulary is not stable. The word 'abduction' was rarely used in the context of removing someone by force. However, this meaning is encapsulated in various phrases used in common parlance and in novels.

It is implicit in my argument that there is a distinction between 'abduction' and 'seduction'. Samuel Johnson defined 'to seduce' as 'to draw aside from the right; to

[47] @ Trustees of the British Museum. Registration number: 1854,0812.254.

tempt; to corrupt; to deprave; to mislead; to deceive'.[48] Seduction is so very often the preamble to, and the final act of, abduction. Deception, temptation, and corruption form the powerful discourse of abduction narratives. But the vocabulary used to describe the act of abduction is less direct. Terms such as 'carried off' and 'went off' are ambiguous. Their meaning is constructed by context and disguised by metaphor and metonymy. My thesis unpacks this ambiguity in the lexicon of 'abduction' and argues that it is fundamental to an understanding of the abduction motif in eighteenth-century fiction as an equivocal narrative.

Newspaper research methodology

The research that underpins my thesis comprises reports from a selection of eighteenth-century newspapers about women who disappeared mysteriously (Appendix A) or eloped to Scotland, usually to Gretna Green (Appendix B). For Appendix A, I consulted newspapers published in London, Bath, and Edinburgh and searched for articles that featured a disappearance that could be termed 'abduction' and had been categorised as news (including gossip and scandal) or advertisements. I included news reports about abduction in Ireland in light of the close relationship between Britain and Ireland leading up to the Act of Union in 1800.[49] For Appendix B, I searched for reports that referred to 'Gretna Green' and its variant spellings. Newspapers often assume that a missing woman has voluntarily eloped. I argue that

[48] Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language*, 2 vols (London: W. Strachan and others, 1755; repr. London: Times Books, 1979). All references to definitions by Johnson are to this edition.
[49] See James Kelly, 'The Abduction of Women of Fortune in Eighteenth-Century Ireland', *Eighteenth Century Ireland*, 9 (1994), 7-43. Toby Barnard explores the issues behind the true-life abduction of Frances Ingoldsbys in May 1744 and links her abduction with political and sectarian issues in Irish society, *The Abduction of a Limerick Heiress: Social and Political Relations in Mid-Eighteenth Century Ireland*, Maynooth Studies in Local History, 20 (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1998).

many of these announcements disguise the true incidence of violent crime against women.

There is a notable difference in the time periods covered by the appendices. Appendix A documents news reports from 1741 to 1811. However, Appendix B documents elopements to Gretna Green. This is because there was no legal reason to elope to Scotland for a valid clandestine marriage until the enactment of the 1753 Marriage Act. The first news reports in Appendix B, therefore, postdate that legislation. Appendix B also contains a greater concentration of news reports from 1770s onwards because after that date the roads improved and travelling became easier. Therefore, announcements about elopements occur more frequently in the later decades. This is discussed by Lisa O'Connell in *Marriage Acts: The Transformation of Eighteenth-Century British Nuptial Culture*.[50] A detailed explanation of my methodology is provided in a preface to the appendices.

The appendices are organised chronologically. I have noted where a story is reported by more than one newspaper by indicating the date and name of each newspaper in which the story appeared. In many cases, the reports are identical but where this is not the case, I have reprinted the story to document the different language used by different newspapers. Where possible, I have followed stories through different newspapers and in some cases this shows that reports of missing women may eventually be concluded as suicide or death by accident. I hope that these appendices will be useful to scholars interested in attitudes to women portrayed in the press.

[50] See chapter 1, footnote 15 and chapter 2, footnote 42 below.

Part One: The Legal and Social Contexts of Abduction

Chapter One: Abduction and the Law

This chapter considers the complex legal landscape associated with 'abduction' as a crime.[1] I argue that abduction in eighteenth-century law is not a single crime but is associated with multiple criminal activities and this makes it difficult to distinguish between forcible abduction and consensual elopement in the historical record. I show that this lack of distinction is documented in news reports that conflate abduction and consensual elopement, often to the detriment of the female victim. These newspaper stories illustrate that women were exposed to criminal activities without access to legal redress.

Hardwicke's Marriage Act of 1753, *An Act for the Better Preventing of Clandestine Marriage* is key to my argument in this chapter.[2] This Act is not the only piece of legislation regulating marriage at this time, however, its purpose is important to my argument about the nature of abduction and its close relationship with clandestine marriage. For example, Attorney General Ryder argued in his speech to Parliament on the Bill that there should be no distinction in law between

[1] An important source for my discussion of the law relating to abduction is Joan I. Schwarz, 'Eighteenth-Century Abduction Law and *Clarissa*', in *Clarissa and Her Readers: New Essays for The Clarissa Project* ed. by Carol Houlihan Flynn and Edward Copeland, vol IX (New York: AMS Press, 1999), 269-308.

[2] *An Act for the Better Preventing of Clandestine Marriage,* Statutes at Large, VII, 1747-1756, 20 Geo 2 – 29 Geo 2, CAP XXXIII. For a discussion of the impact of the 1753 Marriage Act and attempts to prevent clandestine marriage in England, see R. B. Outhwaite, *Clandestine Marriage in England, 1500-1850* (London: Hambledon Press, 1995) and Lisa Marie O'Connell, *Marriage Acts: The Transformation of Eighteenth-Century British Nuptial Culture* (Providence, Rhode Island: Brown University, 2000). O'Connell discusses attempts to repeal the Act that were defeated in the House of Lords and which suggest that the aristocracy was the main beneficiary of the Act, 229-280. The Act was amended in 1823 (to remove annulment due to mistakes in the ceremony) as described by Lawrence Stone, 'From the Marriage Act of 1753 to 1868', *Road to Divorce: England 1530-1987* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990). Tom Keymer observes that *Clarissa* influenced the Act and that Lord Hardwick may have read Richardson's correspondence with Hester Mulso, *Richardson's Clarissa and the Eighteenth-Century Reader* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 103.

clandestine marriage contracted by consent and that contracted by force. I suggest that the Attorney General's argument blurred the line between force and consent (abduction and elopement) in the public consciousness.

I consider the legal context for abduction in English and Scots law. A main difference between these jurisdictions was the requirement under English law that the victim be wealthy. I explore this difference in three cases reported by the press. The first case is a successful prosecution under English law that highlights the legal requirement for the victim to be wealthy and to prove that she was not complicit in her abduction. The second case is a successful prosecution under Scots law where violence rather than wealth is the determining factor in annulling a marriage contracted as a result of abduction. The third case is an unsuccessful prosecution under English law in which the motivation was alleged to be financial fraud. These cases depict abduction as a crime defined through a network of social and legal discourses. In the last case, the victim is male but is feminized by his description as emotionally unstable and mentally weak. I suggest that the reporting of this case is an example of the gendering of abduction as female.

I then illustrate the fictionalisation of these legal principles taking as my preliminary text, Ann Radcliffe's *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* (1789).[3] I argue that Radcliffe's embryonic gothic romance is thoughtful about abduction and its effect on a woman's reputation. I suggest that the literary convention of the exemplary heroine fictionalises the contradiction in abduction law that requires a

[3] Ann Radcliffe, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* (1789), ed. by Alison Milbank (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995). Further references are given after quotations in the text.

woman to be non-complicit and the cultural attitude that is judgemental towards women who suddenly disappear.

Abduction, clandestine marriage, and Hardwicke's Marriage Act of 1753

Eighteenth-century clandestine marriage practices and abduction followed by a forced marriage were undoubtedly recognised as serious threats to eighteenth-century women. It has been estimated that fifteen to twenty per cent of marriages in England in 1745-46 were clandestine (or irregular).[4] In Scotland, where it remained available and popular after the 1753 Marriage Act, the figure is estimated to be approximately a third of all marriages over the century.[5]

Daniel Defoe acknowledged the problem in his treatise of 1727 on marriage abuses, 'snatch'd up, seized upon, hurry'd up into a coach and six' and forcibly married for her money, 'her Fortune seized upon in the Name of the Husband; and perhaps in a few Days more, play'd all away at the Box and the Dice, and the Lady sent Home again naked, and a Beggar'.[6] Lawrence Stone observed that some 'patrons of clandestine marriage shops were ruthless and scheming adventurers who had either kidnapped or procured the love of rich heiresses, and now wanted to marry

[4] Stone, *Road to Divorce*, 116. Rebecca Probert suggests a range of four to thirty per cent in the first half of the eighteenth century, 'The Impact of the Marriage Act of 1753: Was it really "A Most Cruel Law for the Fair Sex?", *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 38.2 (Winter, 2005), 247-262 (249). Stone explained the intricacies of clandestine marriage at the Fleet prison, *Uncertain Unions*: *Marriage in England 1660-1753* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 28. Clandestine marriage was also practiced in France and Italy pointed out at the time by Henry Gally, 'Some Considerations upon Clandestine Marriages' (1750), *The Marriage Act of 1753: Four Tracts* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1984), 81 and 92-118.

[5] Leah Leneman, *Promises, Promises: Marriage Litigation in Scotland 1698-1830* (Edinburgh: NMS Enterprises, 2003), 3.

[6] Daniel Defoe, *Conjugal Lewdness or Matrimonial whoredom: A Treatise Concerning the Use and Abuse of the Marriage Bed* (1727) quoted by Eve Tavor Bannet, 'The Marriage Act of 1753: "A Most Cruel Law for the Fair Sex"', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 30.3 (Spring, 1997), 233-254 (238).

them for their money'.[7] Stone pointed out that abducting heiresses 'had long been a penal offence' but that 'more common were ambiguous episodes involving half drugged female victims'.[8]

It is unlikely, of course, that all private marriages were forced on unwilling partners but the advantage to the unscrupulous of a marriage conducted in private is obvious. A marriage performed in secret, without witnesses, by a man who might not be ordained, or following canon law, could still be declared a valid marriage. Thus an abducted woman forced into a clandestine marriage would be in a precarious legal position. As Henry Gally pointed out, 'For Men, who are wicked enough to attempt to marry Women against their Will, will always be ready and able to procure Witnesses to swear that the Woman gave her Consent, and repeated her Part of the Office.'[9]

The definition of 'clandestine marriage' is extremely broad.[10] Bannet notes that the claims of pregnant women that had been promised marriage would be generally upheld by the courts and that no religious ceremony, witnesses, specific location, or written document were required to attest to a valid marriage.[11] Furthermore, Rebecca Probert points out that the term includes marriages 'celebrated before an ordained clergyman of the Church of England otherwise than in strict

[7] Stone, *Uncertain Unions*, 25.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Gally, 13-14.
[10] Various definitions of clandestine marriage can be found in Rebecca Probert, *Marriage Law and Practice in the Long Eighteenth Century: A Reassessment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2009), 166, and Stone, *Uncertain Unions*, 22. Bannet points out that after the 1753 Act, a 'couple's private verbal promises to live together as man and wife no longer had any force in law', 'The Marriage Act of 1753', 234.
[11] Bannet, 'The Marriage Act of 1753', 234.

accordance with the prescriptions of canon law'.[12] Stone points out that 'clandestine marriage' included those 'conducted by a man who at least purported to be a clergyman'.[13] Thus, prior to the 1753 Act, 'Seductions, as well as abductions and clandestine marriages, were, for all intents and purposes, real marriages.'[14]

The new statutory duties under the 1753 Marriage Act made marriage in England and Wales public and registrable but it did not apply in Scotland and the availability of clandestine marriage at border towns such as Gretna Green is famous.[15] My point here is that the 1753 Act did not prevent abduction and a forced clandestine marriage but it did make it more difficult. That is not to say that the legal status of clandestine marriage under Scots law was clear. Indeed, there was considerable disagreement in the legal profession in Scotland about the validity of such marriages. Two opinions representing the opposing arguments will suffice to illustrate this disagreement. Erskine, the major authority on Scots law, states clearly that 'Marriage is either regular or clandestine' and the difference between the two is the publication of banns 'according to the rules of the church'.[16] Erskine states,

---

[12] Probert, *Marriage Law and Practice*, 166.
[13] Stone, *Uncertain Unions*, 22.
[14] Bannet, 'The Marriage Act of 1753', 234.
[15] Mid-Victorian texts on elopement and clandestine marriage at Gretna Green include Robert Elliott, *The Gretna Green Memoirs* (London: published by the Gretna Green Parson, 1842) and Peter Orlando Hutchinson, *Chronicles of Gretna Green*, 2 vols (London: Richard Bentley, 1844). A later text that romanticises clandestine marriage at Gretna Green is Warren Henry, *Gretna Green Romances* (London: Cecil Palmer, 1926). For a discussion about the importance of Gretna Green to the landscape of eighteenth-century marriage law, see O'Connell, *Marriage Acts*. For the fictionalisation of marriage at Gretna Green see O'Connell, 'Dislocating Literature: The Novel and the Gretna Green Romance, 1770-1850', *Novel: A Forum on Fiction*, 3.1 (Autumn, 2001), 5-23.
[16] John Erskine, *An Institute of the Law of Scotland*, 8th edn., ed. by James Badenach Nicolson (1871) 2 vols (Edinburgh: Law Society of Scotland, Butterworths, repr 1989), I:144. Further references are given after quotations in the text. Footnote (c) states, 'To check the abuse known as Gretna Green marriages' an Act was passed in 1856 (Lord Brougham's Act) that required residency in Scotland for a minimum of twenty-one days for a valid irregular marriage, 'after 31st December 1856 "no irregular marriage contracted in Scotland by declaration, acknowledgement, or ceremony, shall be valid, unless one of the parties had at the date thereof his or her usual place of residence there, or had lived in

'Clandestine marriages, which are contracted without the previous solemnity of publishing banns, are as valid as regular marriages are; but certain penalties have been annexed to them […] affecting not only the parties, but the Celebrator and witnesses' (I:144-145). However, John Martin, a solicitor of the Court of Session, argued that a religious ceremony was 'absolutely necessary to constitute a marriage':

> I was at first led to consider the Marriage Law of *Scotland* to be intricate and unsettled; but on examining the law itself, the mountain vanished, the cloud disappeared, and not a doubt remained in my mind, that, *by the law of* SCOTLAND, *the ceremony of the Church is absolutely necessary to constitute a marriage, and that, without it, marriage cannot be constituted*.[17]

Such legal arguments illustrate the complexity that the courts grappled with when interpreting marriage law. This complex legal landscape makes plain the uncertainty a woman faced in understanding her marital status if she had been the victim of abduction and forced to participate in an irregular ceremony where elements, such as the publication of banns, were not carried out.

The Marriage Act of 1753

The 1753 Marriage Act contributed to the blurred line between abduction and elopement in the public's consciousness. Many scholars have discussed the purpose and effect of the 1753 Act. Their arguments range over issues relating to abduction law such as: that the Bill changed the concept of marriage from a spiritual union to a business transaction; contemporary concerns that it would result in population decline as only legitimate children could inherit; that it concentrated power into the

Scotland for twenty-one days next preceding such marriage"', I:144-145. Erskine notes that this does not apply to other sorts of marriage such as 'promise *cum copula* or 'marriage by habite and repute', I:145.

[17] John Martin, *The Marriage Law of Scotland, Stated* (London: R. Jameson, 1787), 11.

hands of the aristocracy by preventing minors marrying without their guardian's consent, and that it merely reinforced requirements already established under canon law, which were generally complied with by custom and practice.[18]

The crime of abduction features prominently in Attorney General Ryder's speech on the Bill to Parliament in which he placed clandestine marriage in the context of abduction law: 'How often have we known a rich heiress carried off by a man of low birth, or perhaps an infamous sharper?' [19] Ryder's argument recognises that the threat abduction posed to wealthy women was a threat to those who controlled her fortune. He said that it was not possible to separate marriage contracted by abduction or by seduction ('taken away' and 'seduced' respectively (357)). He acknowledged that by not making this distinction, the punishment would sometimes be considered too harsh: 'because the several cases cannot be properly distinguished, and a punishment that would be so severe as to be effectual in the most heinous and most tempting case, would be by much too severe in all the others' (358). However, he argued that, 'Nothing can, in my opinion, Sir be effectual for preventing clandestine marriages of every kind, but that of declaring all such marriages null and void to all intents and purposes whatsoever' (358).

[18] These arguments are explored by Bannet, 'The Marriage Act of 1753'; David Lemmings, 'Marriage and the Law in the Eighteenth Century: Hardwicke's Marriage Act of 1753', *The Historical Journal*, 39.2 (June, 1996), 339-360; Outhwaite, *Clandestine Marriage in England*, and Probert, *Marriage Law and Practice in the Long Eighteenth Century*.

[19] 'Letter', *London Magazine, or Gentleman's Monthly Intelligencer, 1747-1783*, 22 (August, 1753), 356-361 (357). Further references are given after quotations in the text. All references to the parliamentary debate are taken from the *London Magazine*. I have chosen to quote from this magazine because we know that its readership ranged across social class, gender, and age as described by Fergus, 206, 209-210, and 220. Outhwaite noted that Ryder's speech drew attention, amongst other things, to abduction law, 87.

So, Ryder argued that preventing all clandestine marriage was more important than distinguishing between clandestine marriages contracted under duress and those contracted consensually but which the participants preferred to keep private. Ryder recognised that both genders were likely to be victims of abduction. He stated specifically that a crime had been committed when 'seducing a young man or a young woman away from their parents' (357). The Attorney General, therefore, confirmed the Bill as applying equally to both genders, to those who willingly contracted to a private marriage, and to those who were victims of abduction and forced marriage.

Many of the speeches made in favour of the Bill assume legislative action is necessary because women require protection from their own emotional instability as well as from unscrupulous men. The speeches condone patriarchy as a benevolent social system.[20] The need to protect land and financial wealth is the subtext. We can see this argument in two speeches that touch on the distinction between consent and force, elopement and abduction: Lord Barrington, who supported the Bill, and the Honourable Charles Townshend, who did not.

Lord Barrington argued in favour of the Bill because marriage law was too complex. He stated that, 'it is now so very difficult to determine what is, or is not a good marriage'.[21] His comment is significant because it implies that a fundamental structure underpinning society lacked stability. His assertion suggests that those

[20] Lemmings discusses the 1753 Act in terms of reinforcing patriarchy, 'Marriage and the Law in the Eighteenth Century'.
[21] *London Magazine*, 22 (September, 1753), 407-410 (409). Further references are given after quotations in the text.

contracting a consensual clandestine marriage would face difficulties in proving their marital status. Thus, victims of abduction forced into a clandestine marriage would face even greater difficulties. Barrington's support, however, was qualified by his argument that women could not be deceived into marriage against their will. He argued that women should bear the responsibility for ensuring their marriage was valid because 'no woman can be deceived, if she is not willing to be so, and for such women the law ought not to prove any relief, because they deserve none' (409).

So, although Barrington supported the Bill, his argument for doing so was to protect the *exemplary* woman who could not be deemed culpable for her predicament. This stance offers little comfort to women because it denies the possibility that they could be deceived into marriage. Barrington made no allowance for the criminal act of abduction leading to forced marriage and placed the blame for being coerced into an invalid marriage squarely on the shoulders of the woman. His argument suggests that violence must be a determining factor in any abduction claim because it would be extremely difficult for women to prove that they had been abducted and forced to marry against their will without the physical signs of violence.

The Honourable Charles Townshend supported clandestine marriage and argued against the Bill. He argued that clandestine marriage was only a 'publick evil' where it was 'scandalous and infamous upon one side or the other'.[22] By which he

[22] *London Magazine*, 22 (November, 1753), 497-505 (498). Further references are given after quotations in the text. Lemmings points out that Townshend 'actually saw marriage as the way to advantage himself. He subsequently married a wealthy widow eight years his senior, and took the opportunity to coerce a larger portion out of his father', 'Marriage and the Law in the Eighteenth-Century', 355.

meant those marriages involving ‘a gentleman of character and an abandoned prostitute, or a lady of character and a notorious rogue or common sharper’ (499). Townshend acknowledged that, ‘we may, perhaps, have sharpers amongst us, whose addresses would be approved of even by the parents of most ladies of quality in the kingdom’ (499). Townshend argued that the Bill was an unnecessary restriction on the freedom to marry and was dismissive of the argument that clandestine marriage encouraged criminal activity because such incidents ‘so rarely happen, that they do not deserve to be taken any notice of by the legislature’ (501).

Barrington’s gendered argument that only women willing to be deceived would be vulnerable to invalid marriage, was successful over Townshend’s argument that those who consented to a private marriage could be easily distinguished from those that did not and that forced marriage was too rare for there to be any value in regulation. The Bill, therefore, succeeded and dissolved the distinction between consensual and forced clandestine marriage.

The Bill included a clause that required the Act to be read out in church. This weaves together ecclesiastical and secular law. Barrington welcomed the clause on the grounds that such a ‘very extraordinary’ measure would be an effective means to inform women in particular about the new legislation: ‘women will be less liable to be deceived by a sham marriage’ (408). However, his argument assumes a lay society familiar with legal discourse. Anecdotal evidence suggests that his assumption was patchy at best. Some elements, such as the voiding of all clandestine marriage, was indeed understood. An anecdote from Aldergate tells us that when the clergyman ‘mentioned the Marriages to be void and of none Effect, [a woman]

stretched out her Hands, and cried, sighing, *Lord have Mercy on us, we shall be all Whores*; which caused the Congregation to laugh'.[23] However, another anecdote suggests that the response to the Act was just as likely to be apathy: 'We hear from Richmond that on Sunday last as the Rev. Mr Clate was about to read the Marriage Act, all the Congregation dispersed, and only about half a Score staid to hear him out.'[24]

I have been arguing that abduction law was a significant element of Attorney General Ryder's speech in which he made the link between abduction and clandestine marriage clear. This link was also implied in speeches made by other parliamentarians, some of whom disputed the view that abduction and non-consensual marriage was a significant issue. The Act was promulgated in churches, which reinforced the spiritual and public aspect of marriage. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that its effectiveness in making the Act widely known was not wholly successful which had implications for women who were coerced into marriage as a result of abduction.

The various arguments for and against the Bill are encoded in novels in which women are violently abducted for their fortunes and forced into sham marriages as a prelude to rape or abducted in complex seduction schemes. Richardson's *Clarissa* is a famous example of the ambiguity that existed in the public perception about abduction and consensual elopement. The representation in fiction of an exemplary heroine who might have been complicit in a sexual adventure

[23] *London Evening-Post*, 20-23 October 1753, 'News', 4.
[24] *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 1 April 1754, 'London', 1.

was a contemporary concern.[25] Scholars agree that Richardson's deliberate equivocation about Clarissa's culpability for her abduction is central to the plot.[26] Richardson addressed the issue of abduction again in *The History of Sir Charles Grandison* (1753-54). In his last novel, the heroine is not represented as complicit (for example, she makes no arrangements to meet her abductor, unlike Clarissa) but she is represented as culpable through immodest behaviour and dress.[27] I aim to show that writers as diverse as Eliza Haywood, Samuel Richardson, and Charlotte Smith address the social and cultural concerns created by this blurred distinction between consent and force as a result of the complex legal landscape surrounding the crime of abduction.

Abduction: the legal landscape

The law relating to abduction does not stand apart from other criminal activity. It enters into a number of legal discourses as part of a network of statutes that include sexual crimes, marriage, and financial and inheritance fraud. This complexity means that a detailed examination is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, abduction and its links to other criminal activity is important when considering the nature of the crime and when looking back to the cultural and social framework that underpins fictional abduction plots.

[25] Mary Vermillion discusses the relationship between *Clarissa* and the issues raised by the Marriage Act, 'Clarissa and the Marriage Act', *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, 9.4 (July 1997), 395-414.
[26] I discuss *Clarissa* in chapter three.
[27] Richardson discussed *Grandison* with Philip York, Lord Hardwicke's eldest son. Richardson also printed for Hardwicke's second son, Charles (Keymer, 103).

Approximately 13,600 Acts were added to the statue books between 1689 and 1801, the majority of which were passed after 1759.[28] Susan Glover argues that the weight of legislation passed by Parliament over the eighteenth century affected the ability of the legal profession to be conversant with the law. The sheer volume of new statutes, she suggests, 'eclipsed the capacity of any lawyer or judge to master the law pertaining to any particular case'.[29] The lay person, therefore, would be at a serious disadvantage in attempting to understand how the law applied to them.

The publication of parliamentary debates and reports of trials in ephemeral literature, such as newspapers and magazines, illustrates an appetite beyond the legal profession to engage with the law. As does the number and variety of legal texts and digests published for lay consumption. I noted earlier that book clubs purchased a significant number of non-fiction texts. The discussion that follows outlines, in broad terms, the legal principles of abduction law in specific eighteenth-century works and then discusses these general principles through case studies reported in contemporary newspapers.

Abduction in English law

The crime of abduction is a specific category in William Blackstone's codification of English law, *Commentaries on the laws of England* (1765-1769). He stated that abduction required a financial motive for a successful prosecution. Blackstone pointed out that the law distinguished between abducting a woman and forcing her

[28] Simon Deveraux, 'The Promulgation of the Statutes in late Hanoverian Britain', in *The British and their Laws in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. by David Lemmings (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005), 80-101 (83).
[29] Susan Paterson Glover, *Engendering Legitimacy: Law, Property, and Early Eighteenth-Century Fiction* (Lewisburg: Buckness University Press, 2006), 157.

into marriage as a means to evade the possibility of her acting as a witness against her husband and abducting a woman of property and forcing her into marriage for financial gain ('stealing an heiress').[30] In the latter situation, a capital crime was committed where the abduction was for money and the woman was taken against her will and married or 'defiled':

> if any person shall for lucre take any woman, maid, widow or wife, having substance either in goods or lands, or being heir apparent to her ancestors, contrary to her will; and afterwards shall be married to such misdoer, or by his consent to others, or defiled, such person, and all his accessories, shall be deemed principal felons: and […] the benefit of clergy is taken away from all such felons, except accessories *after* the offence. (IV:208)

The husband could claim against the perpetrator for damages where his wife had been abducted: 'the husband shall recover, not the possession of his wife, but damages for taking her away' (III:139). The law did not distinguish between an abduction accomplished by 'fraud or persuasion' or one accomplished by 'open violence' because it assumed 'force and constraint' in all cases as 'the wife [has] no power to consent' (III:139).

The law required a motive for forcible abduction followed by unlawful confinement so that abduction alone might not result in a successful prosecution. A conviction for abduction must be accompanied by proof that it had been carried out for money, that the woman was not complicit, and that she was subsequently married

[30] William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the laws of England*, in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, 4 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1765-1769), III and IV. Further references are given after quotations in the text. Blackstone differentiated 'kidnap' and 'false imprisonment'. Kidnapping is the 'forcible abduction or stealing away of a man, woman or child from their country, and selling them to another', IV:219. Glover discusses the legal restrictions on property ownership by married women and the controversy around the precise details of female legal rights, 30-33. She makes the point that 'loss of property, while distressing, was not irrevocable, unlike marriage', 143.

or raped. The most important stipulation was the financial imperative from which all other requirements flowed:

> the indictment must allege that the taking was for lucre […]. In order to show this, it must appear that the woman has substance either real or personal, or is an heir apparent. […] It must appear that she was taken away against her will. […] It must also appear that she was afterwards married or defiled'. (IV:208)

John P. Zomchick argues that an abducted woman without property could complain about rape but could *not* complain about abduction: 'it had to be proven that a woman was taken against her will for "lucre" and subsequently "married or defiled" thus leaving women without property the recourse of a complaint for rape only'.[31] Zomchick quotes from Blackstone that this 'lessened "the social and ethical value"' of the law by 1770.[32]

Blackstone also linked abduction to rape. He suggested that both should attract the death penalty as independent crimes:

> The civil law punishes the crime of ravishment with death and confiscation of goods: under which it includes both the offence of forcible abduction […] and also the present offence of forcibly dishonouring them; either of which, without the other, is in that law, sufficient to constitute a capital crime. (IV:210)

Furthermore, if the woman subsequently gave her consent, 'being won thereonto by flatteries' (IV:208), the crime of abduction stood. The alternative situation was also

[31] John P. Zomchick, *Family and the law in eighteenth-century fiction: The public conscience in the private sphere* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 98. A woman also had value in her physical presence, such as her social status or as a lucrative trafficking proposition, as Janet Todd points out, 'To steal or defile an heiress was equivalent to theft on a large scale and should carry severe punishment', *Sign of the Angelica, Women, Writing and Fiction 1600-1800* (London: Virago, 1989), 111.
[32] Zomchick, 98.

regarded as abduction so that 'if the woman be originally taken away with her own consent' but then 'refuse to continue' with the 'offender' and was retained by force, 'she may, from that time […] be said to be taken against her will, as if she never had given any consent at all' (IV:209).

Blackstone also stated that it was a crime to abduct an unmarried female child of sixteen or under 'against the will of the father, mother, guardians or governors', for which punishment was imprisonment for two years or a fine. Also, 'if he deflowers such maid or woman child, or, without the consent of the parents, contracts matrimony with her' the sentence would be increased to five years (IV:209). In addition, the girl 'shall forfeit all her lands to her next of kin, during the life of her said husband' (IV:209). Blackstone explained that such marriages were 'stolen marriages' undertaken 'upon mercenary views' and that therefore the punishments were designed as deterrents. He acknowledged that the 1753 Marriage Act rendered marriages of minors 'totally void' (IV:210).

The law according to Blackstone, therefore, recognised abduction as a crime and linked it to other criminal activities such as violence, theft, and rape. Legal redress concerned compensation for the loss of property and this required a monetary value to be calculated for the victim's ordeal.

Blackstone's *Commentaries* was not the only legal digest available to the lay reader. Historians suggest that texts such as the anonymously published *The laws respecting women, as they regard their natural rights…*' (1777) would be consulted

by the 'middling-sort of women wishing to discover where they stood at law'.[33] The *Monthly Review* recommended the digest as 'judicious' and 'entertaining'.[34] The digest comprises laws relating to women in terms of their relationships with men. The preface implies that the methodology for selection focussed on enabling men to understand their relationship to women rather than women seeking information about their status in law:

> no selection could be made from the venerable pile of law-learning and precedents, more generally important and useful, than the laws which treat of the concerns of women, and the interest arising to men, from their connections and alliances with women. (iv)

The digest states that, 'What is commonly called stealing an heiress, is more technically styled by the law, forcible abduction and marriage' (7). It states that 'Taking a wife away from her husband, is commonly called in the law abduction. This may be done with the consent of the wife, or forcibly and violently' (53). The digest clarifies that in both cases 'the law always supposes compulsion and force to have been used, because the wife is not supposed to possess a power of consent' (53). The digest points out that the husband 'shall recover, not the possession of his wife, but damages for taking her away' (53). The penalties imposed on the offender would be two years' imprisonment and a fine 'at the pleasure of the king' (53-54).

Joan I. Schwarz has helpfully set out who could prosecute under English law for the crimes of seduction, abduction, and rape. For seduction, the law 'was based

[33] *The laws respecting women, as they regard their natural rights …*, in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (London: Joseph Johnson, 1777). Further references are given after quotations in the text; Nicola Philips, *Women in Business 1700-1850* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006), 35.
[34] G., 'ART. VI., The Laws Respecting WOMEN…', *Monthly Review, Or, Literary Journal, 1752-1825*, 57 (December, 1777), 441-449 (449).

on the fiction of an unlawful act causing damage to the female's father and resulting in a breach of contract for service; it was an action only the father could bring'.[35] However, in respect of abduction, 'a statutory criminal action could be brought either by a father or by the abducted daughter herself'.[36] An action for rape, 'depending on a woman's marital status and the rape statue under which she prosecuted, either the raped female and/or her family or her husband could prosecute'.[37]

Abduction in Scots Law

'Abduction' in Scots law is not a clear legal category as codified in English law by Blackstone. Erskine summarises criminal acts in Scots public law following the categories established by Sir George Mackenzies' text, *Institutions of the Law of Scotland* (1684).[38] Mackenzie does not include abduction as a crime. A footnote in Erskine points this out: 'There is no mention in the text [i.e. Mackenzie's *Institutes*] of several well-known crimes, of which the following are the more important' and abduction is listed beneath 'wilful fire-raising' (II:1215(a)(2)). In this footnote, abduction is described as 'the forcibly carrying off any person without lawful authority. This crime was formerly committed not unfrequently upon women, with a view either to commit rape or to compel marriage' (II:1215(a)(2)). Abduction, therefore, was associated directly with rape and forced marriage but not financial or

[35] Schwarz, 271.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Sir George Mackenzie, *The Institutions of the Law of Scotland*, 8th edition, corrected (Edinburgh: E. and J. Robertsons for L Hunter and J Brown, 1758). The first edition of which was published in 1684 and was replaced as the authoritative statement of Scots law by John Erskine's text in 1758. See "Mackenzie, Sir George, of Rosehaugh (1636/1638–1691)," Clare Jackson in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. by H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), online edn., ed. by David Cannadine, January 2007 <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/17579> [accessed 12 March 2017].

landed wealth. Thus the law relating to rape is important to an understanding of the crime of abduction under Scots law.

In Erskine, rape 'by the general opinion of civilians' is 'the forcible carrying off or abduction of the woman's person, with a view to violate it, though there should be no actual violation' (II:1201). This suggests that the intent to rape would be sufficient for a prosecution for abduction. Erskine also acknowledges Mackenzie's opinion that 'the punishment of rape ought not to be inflicted unless where the abduction hath had its full effect' (II:1202). Erskine notes, 'There is no explicit statute making this crime capital; but it is plainly supposed' that the only defence available to avoid a death sentence would be if the woman gave 'her subsequent consent' or admitted that 'she went off with him of her own free will' (II:1202). The penalty would then be imprisonment, confiscation of goods, or a pecuniary fine (II:1202). Other stipulations noted for the crime of rape include, 'it must appear that the woman resisted to the end to the utmost of her strength' (unless the victim is under twelve years); that the woman be 'put in terror of her life', 'has been drugged, or otherwise stupefied', or was 'of weak intellect' (II:1202). In addition, in defining the marriage contract, Erskine notes that consent is required and it should be 'free and voluntary' (I:137 (footnote *)) and that 'Where the marriage has taken place under the influence of force, fraud, or fear, it will be set aside if timeously challenged, so soon as these influences are withdrawn' (I:137 footnote (a)).

In both English and Scots law abduction in the eighteenth century was a heterogeneous concept associated with multiple criminal activities such as

clandestine marriage, inheritance fraud, theft, sexual assault, and rape. Abduction in Scots law was linked to rape and forced marriage but was not a separate and distinct category. All of which would make prosecuting a complex legal task.

Prosecutions for abduction: the newspaper angle

Abduction was a complex crime associated with multiple criminal activities. News reports of prosecutions involving abduction demonstrate this complexity and in this section I discuss three specific cases. The first case illustrates a major theme of my thesis, the difficulty in distinguishing between consensual elopement and abduction. The second case shows that violence was a deciding factor in a prosecution under Scots law. The third case illustrates abduction's link to multiple criminal activities, particularly financial fraud which is the main theme of this chapter. The victim is male but he is feminized by news reports that accord him attributes normally associated with women.

Mary Pearce (1803-1804)

The case for conspiracy to abduct Mary Pearce, a ward of court, highlights the difficulty in deciding whether the victim has been abducted or consented to elope.[39] We have seen that abduction law allowed for a victim to consent to an elopement and then renounce that decision. Zomchick points out that abduction law could be 'construed to allow for the possibility that the woman may have been tricked by her abductor'.[40] He quotes from *The laws respecting women*, which states that:

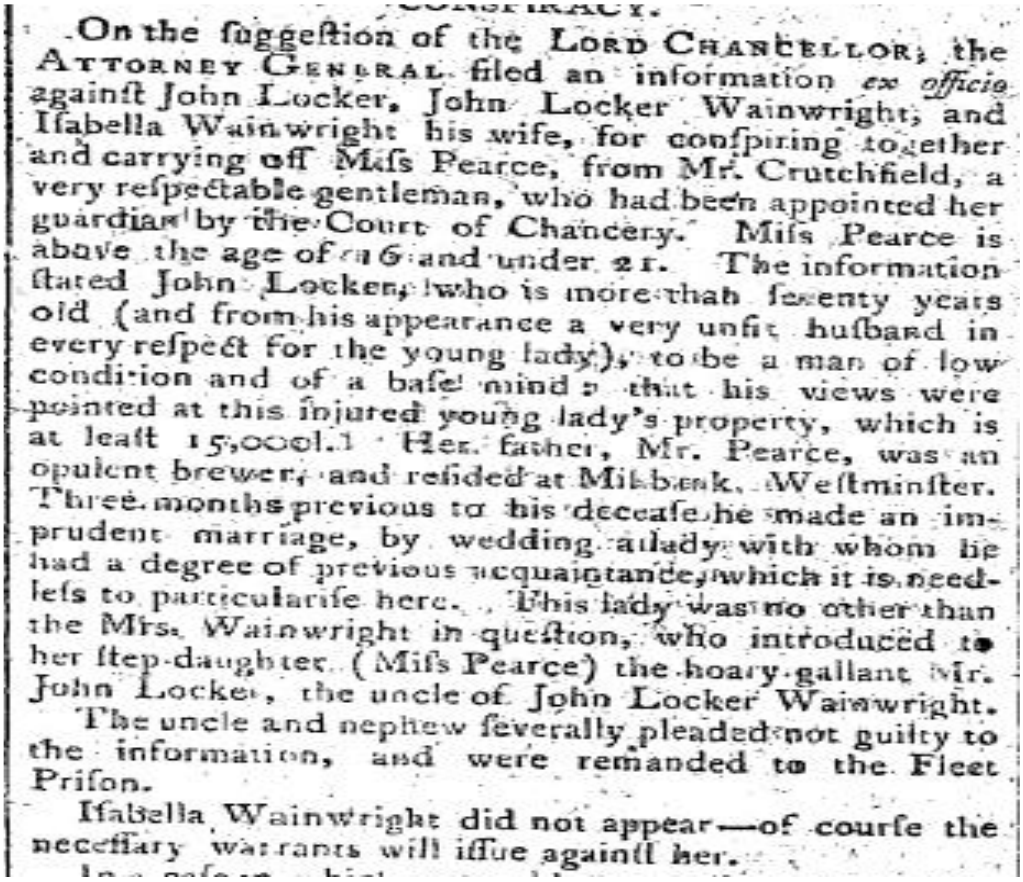
> And though possibly the marriage or defilement after her forcible taking away, may be by her consent, she being wrought upon to give it by persuasion and management; yet such subsequent consent does not abate the felony, if the first

[39] See Appendix A, Table 4 for newspaper references about this case.
[40] Zomchick, footnote 42, page 98.

> taking away was against her will; and so *vice-versa*, if the woman be originally taken away with her own consent, yet if she afterwards refuse to continue with the offender, and is forced against her will, she may from that time be said to be taken against her will, as properly as if she had never given any consent at all. For till the force was put upon her she was in her own power. (294)

The law acknowledges that consent and force are unstable concepts and that the victim of abduction and sexual assault might at first appear to be the consenting participant in an elopement. The language here assumes that the woman plays a passive role because she would be regarded as 'taken away' even if she had consented to elope. We can see this difficulty in the case of Mary Pearce who the prosecution claimed had been abducted and forcibly married:

> On the suggestion of the LORD CHANCELLOR, the ATTORNEY GENERAL filed an information *ex officio* against John Locker. John Locker Wainwright, and Isabella Wainwright: his wife, for conspiring together and carrying off Miss Pearce, from Mr Crutchfield, a very respectable gentleman, who had been appointed her guardian by the Court of Chancery. Miss Pearce is above the age of 16 and under 21. The information stated John Locker, who is more than seventy years old (and from his appearance a very unfit husband in every respect for the young lady), to be a man of low condition and of a base mind: that his views were pointed at this injured young lady's property, which is at least 15,000l. Her father, Mr. Pearce, was an opulent brewer, and resided at Milbank, Westminster. Three months previous to his decease he made an imprudent marriage, by wedding a lady with whom he had a degree of previous acquaintance, which it is needless to particularise here. This lady was no other than the Mrs. Wainwright in question, who introduced her stepdaughter (Miss Pearce) the hoary gallant Mr. John Locke, the uncle of John Locker Wainwright.
>
> The uncle and nephew severally pleaded not guilty to the information, and were remanded to the Fleet Prison.
>
> Isabella Wainwright did not appear – of course the necessary warrants will issue against her. (Figure 3).



On the ſuggeſtion of the LORD CHANCELLOR, the ATTORNEY GENERAL filed an information *ex officio* againſt John Locker, John Locker Wainwright, and Iſabella Wainwright his wife, for conſpiring together and carrying off Miſs Pearce, from Mr. Crutchfield, a very reſpectable gentleman, who had been appointed her guardian by the Court of Chancery. Miſs Pearce is above the age of 16 and under 21. The information ſtated John Locker, who is more than ſeventy years old (and from his appearance a very unfit huſband in every reſpect for the young lady), to be a man of low condition and of a baſe mind; that his views were pointed at this injured young lady's property, which is at leaſt 15,000l. Her father, Mr. Pearce, was an opulent brewer, and reſided at Millbank, Weſtminſter. Three months previous to his deceaſe he made an imprudent marriage, by wedding a lady with whom he had a degree of previous acquaintance, which it is needleſs to particulariſe here. This lady was no other than the Mrs. Wainwright in queſtion, who introduced to her ſtep-daughter (Miſs Pearce) the hoary gallant Mr. John Locker, the uncle of John Locker Wainwright.

The uncle and nephew ſeverally pleaded not guilty to the information, and were remanded to the Fleet Priſon.

Iſabella Wainwright did not appear—of courſe the neceſſary warrants will iſſue againſt her.

Figure 3: Morning Chronicle, 28 November 1803, 'Law Intelligence', 3.[41]

The prosecution's case against the Lockers was grounded in Mary Pearce's fortune: 'His Lordship considered the whole as a foul and mercenary transaction'.[42] However, at least one newspaper announced the case as an 'elopement'.[43] Samuel Johnson defined 'elopement' as 'departure from just restraint, rejection of lawful power.'[44] This suggests that the participants to an elopement defied those who held

[41] Gale Document Number: BB3207091365. © Copyright Cengage Learning.
[42] *Morning Chronicle*, 5 September 1803, 'News', 3.
[43] *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 3 September 1803, 'News', 2.
[44] Johnson gives as an example, 'An elopement is the voluntary departure of a wife from her husband to live with an adulterer, and with whom she lives in breach of matrimonial law.' This is not the sense in which it is used in many examples of elopement to Gretna Green.

lawful authority over them. In this case, as Mary was a ward of court, they defied the authority of the courts.

News reports about this case are inconsistent about the use of force. The language suggests that 'elopement' is an ambiguous term in journalistic discourse. Mary is described as: 'inveigle[d]' to elope;[45] 'taken away' and 'induce[d]' to marry;[46] 'entice[d]' and 'procure[d]' [47], or 'assisted'.[48] The defendants 'contrived to take her away', and enlisted the help of a man to 'facilitat[e] the escape'.[49] This imprecise language affects the ability of the reader to come to a clear judgement about whether Mary was complicit in her elopement or whether she had been abducted. However, the need to make this distinction was ruled immaterial as Mary had a precise legal status: 'it was clearly an act of criminality to marry a Ward in Chancery with her own consent, or even to attempt to gain an undue ascendancy over her inclinations'.[50]

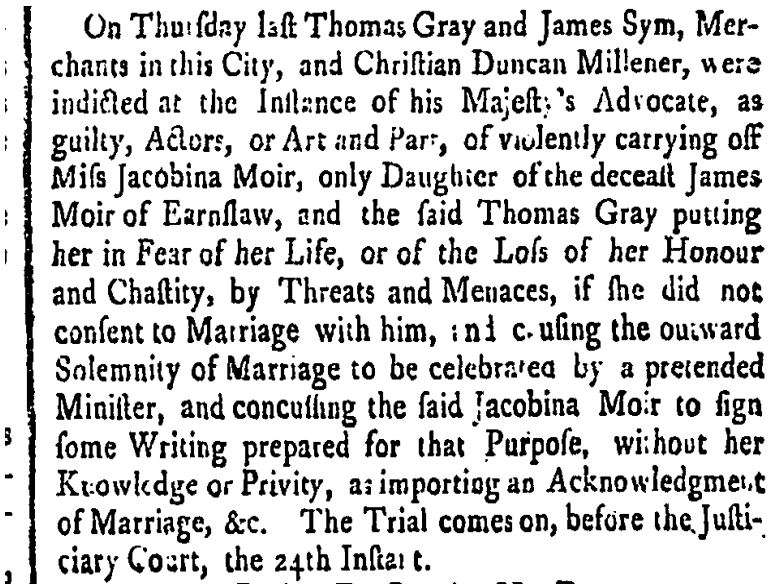
In this case, Mary's legal status overrode any suggestion that she had been complicit in a consensual elopement. However, the interest for the newspapers (and presumably their readership) is unpicking the question of whether Mary eloped or was abducted; was she forced or did she consent?

[45] *Morning Chronicle*, 23 February 1804, 'Law Intelligence', 3.
[46] *Morning Post*, 23 February 1804, 'Law Intelligence', 3.
[47] *Bury and Norwich Post, or Suffolk, Norfolk, Essex, and Cambridge Advertiser*, 29 February 1804, 'Law Intelligence', 4.
[48] *Morning Chronicle*, 5 September 1803, 'News', 3.
[49] *Caledonian Mercury*, 1 March 1804, 'Court of the Kings Bench', 4.
[50] Ibid.

Jacobina Moir (1751)

In Edinburgh in 1751, Thomas Gray was convicted of the violent abduction of Jacobina Moir.[51] This case is important to my argument because it illustrates a conviction under Scots law based on the violence of the sexual assault rather than on the theft of a fortune. The case was reported by English-based newspapers as well as by the Scottish press:

> On Thursday last Thomas Gray and James Sym, Merchants in this City, and Christian Duncan Millener, were indicted at the Instance of his Majesty's Advocate, as guilty, Actors, or Art and Part, of violently carrying off Miss Jacobina Moir, only Daughter of the deceased James Moir of Earnshaw, and the said Thomas Gray putting her in Fear of her Life, or of the Loss of her Honour and Chastity, by Threats and Menaces, if she did not consent to Marriage with him, including the outward Solemnity of Marriage to be celebrated by a pretended Minister, and [concussing?] the said Jacobina Moir to sign some Writing prepared for that Purpose, without her Knowledge or Privity, as importing an Acknowledgement of Marriage, &c. The Trial comes on, before the Justiciary Court, the 24th Instant. (Figure 4).



On Thurſday laſt Thomas Gray and James Sym, Merchants in this City, and Chriſtian Duncan Millener, were indicted at the Inſtance of his Majeſty's Advocate, as guilty, Actors, or Art and Part, of violently carrying off Miſs Jacobina Moir, only Daughter of the deceaſt James Moir of Earnſlaw, and the ſaid Thomas Gray putting her in Fear of her Life, or of the Loſs of her Honour and Chaſtity, by Threats and Menaces, if ſhe did not conſent to Marriage with him, including the outward Solemnity of Marriage to be celebrated by a pretended Miniſter, and concuſſing the ſaid Jacobina Moir to ſign ſome Writing prepared for that Purpoſe, without her Knowledge or Privity, as importing an Acknowledgment of Marriage, &c. The Trial comes on, before the Juſticiary Court, the 24th Inſtant.

Figure 4: *General Advertiser*, 18 June 1751, 'Scotland', 1

[51] Gale Document Number: Z2000422706 © Copyright Cengage Learning. This case occurs before the passage of the 1753 Marriage Act.

This piece contains little details of the crime but accurately transcribes the legal principles required to secure a conviction. The victim is 'violently' abducted, put 'in fear of her life, or of the loss of her honour and chastity', and forced to consent to a sham marriage by 'threats and menaces'. The victim's marriage is subsequently declared invalid on the grounds that it was not compatible with a conviction for violent assault. Gray is found 'guilty of force and compulsion, which was "inconsistent with his present allegation that the defender was freely and voluntarily marryed to him"'.[52] Jacobina survived her abduction and saw the perpetrator convicted and her marriage annulled as a result of the degree of force used against her. There is no suggestion in the newspaper piece that she was wealthy or that Gray had a financial motive for his actions.

Edward Frank (1800-1802)

Edward Frank's case is significant because it demonstrates the feminization of male victims through language normally associated with women: emotional instability and weak intellect.[53] Blackstone and *The laws respecting women* gender abduction as female (as does the reference to abduction in Erskine). However, men were also victims. Edward is referred to as of 'weak intellects' and 'ensnared'. The prosecution alleged that the motivation was the victim's 'great fortune'. The case was brought by the victim's father and fell when the judge recommended that the case be withdrawn on the basis that there was no evidence to support an argument for non-consent. This

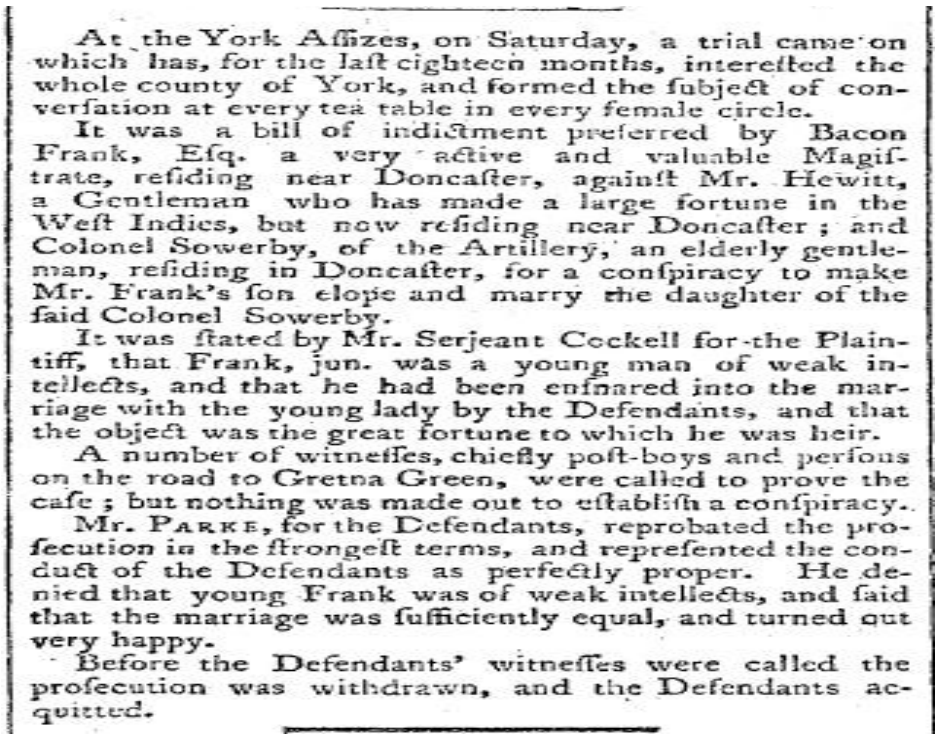
[52] Leneman, 187.
[53] See Appendix A, Table 3 for newspaper references about this case.

case shows that abduction was not a crime in itself but was defined through a network of social and legal discourses.

The newspapers reported the case as a conspiracy to elope and as of interest to gossiping women:

> At the York Assizes, on Saturday, a trial came on which has, for the last eighteen months, interested the whole county of York, and formed the subject of conversation at every tea table in every female circle.[54]
>
> It was a bill of indictment preferred by Bacon Frank, Esq, a very active and valuable Magistrate, residing near Doncaster, against Mr. Hewitt, a Gentleman who has made a large fortune in the West Indies, but now residing near Doncaster; and Colonel Sowerby, of the Artillery, an elderly gentleman, residing in Doncaster, for a conspiracy to make Mr. Frank's son elope and marry the daughter of the said Colonel Sowerby.
>
> It was stated by Mr. Serjeant Cockell for the Plaintiff, that Frank, jun. was a young man of weak intellects, and that he had been ensnared into the marriage with the young lady by the Defendants, and that the object was the great fortune to which he was heir.
>
> […]
>
> Mr. PARKE, for the Defendants, reprobated the prosecution in the strongest terms, and represented the conduct of the Defendants as perfectly proper. He denied that young Frank was of weak intellects, and said that the marriage was sufficiently equal, and turned out very happy.
>
> Before the Defendants' witnesses were called the prosecution was withdrawn, and the Defendants acquitted. (Figure 5)

[54] Clare Brant argues that rituals, like tea-making, involve gender-based acknowledgements of male and female roles in which 'women act as passive or willing agents of patriarchal order. In contrast, disrupting this ideal norm unleashes anarchy of mythic proportions', 'Speaking of Women: Scandal and the Law in the mid-eighteenth century', in *Women, Texts and Histories 1575-1760*, ed. by Clare Brant and Diane Purkiss (London: Routledge, 1992), 242-266 (249).



At the York Aſſizes, on Saturday, a trial came on which has, for the laſt eighteen months, intereſted the whole county of York, and formed the ſubject of converſation at every tea table in every female circle.

It was a bill of indictment preferred by Bacon Frank, Eſq. a very active and valuable Magiſtrate, reſiding near Doncaſter, againſt Mr. Hewitt, a Gentleman who has made a large fortune in the Weſt Indies, but now reſiding near Doncaſter; and Colonel Sowerby, of the Artillery, an elderly gentleman, reſiding in Doncaſter, for a conſpiracy to make Mr. Frank's ſon elope and marry the daughter of the ſaid Colonel Sowerby.

It was ſtated by Mr. Serjeant Cockell for the Plaintiff, that Frank, jun. was a young man of weak intellects, and that he had been enſnared into the marriage with the young lady by the Defendants, and that the object was the great fortune to which he was heir.

A number of witneſſes, chiefly poſt-boys and perſons on the road to Gretna Green, were called to prove the caſe; but nothing was made out to eſtabliſh a conſpiracy.

Mr. PARKE, for the Defendants, reprobated the proſecution in the ſtrongeſt terms, and repreſented the conduct of the Defendants as perfectly proper. He denied that young Frank was of weak intellects, and ſaid that the marriage was ſufficiently equal, and turned out very happy.

Before the Defendants' witneſſes were called the proſecution was withdrawn, and the Defendants acquitted.

Figure 5: *Morning Chronicle,* 18 March 1802, 'News', 3.[55]

The case was primarily a dispute between guardians about the destination of an inheritance. The prosecution alleged that Edward Frank had been abducted against his will. Edward's father, Bacon Frank, prosecuted Colonel Sowerby and Mr Hewitt 'for a conspiracy to make [Edward] elope and marry' Sowerby's daughter, Mary. At stake was Frank's fortune of £6,000 per annum and his expectation of an entailed estate worth £4,000 per annum. Mary Sowerby was 'not possessed of a penny, or of any expectations' although some newspapers appeared to state otherwise.[56] Bacon Frank argued that Sowerby and Hewitt conspired to take advantage of the 'weak intellects' of his son to steal his fortune. He claimed that

[55] Gale Document Number: BB3207086726 © Copyright Cengage Learning.
[56] *Morning Post and Gazetteer*, 17 March 1802, 'A Runaway Marriage', 3; *Morning Chronicle*, 24 March 1802 states that Mary was independently wealthy, 'News' 3.

Hewitt accompanied Edward to Gretna Green 'knowing that young Frank was not to be trusted'.[57]

The newspapers report that Edward exhibited such feminine traits of inconsistency and sensibility whilst Mary exhibited the male traits of intelligence and maturity as well as the avarice of a fortune hunter. The reversal of gender roles in these news reports is striking. It suggests that a male victim ought to display feminine attributes, such as emotional instability and mental incapacity, for the law to declare him innocent of complicity. Although, as we shall see, such traits in women would not necessarily be regarded in the same light. Edward 'was exceedingly low and dejected; that tears were seen to come from his eyes, and no doubt could remain he was intimidated into the match'.[58] Mary, by contrast:

> was a fine, sprightly, clever, beautiful girl, rather older than her husband; and, looking to her situation, to the character of Mr Frank, jun. and to his fortune, the Counsel inferred it was not probable she could have married from affection, but that a splendid equipage and handsome stile of living must have been her object.[59]

The important point here is that, although Mary was accused of being a fortune hunter, the prosecution was against her father for arranging the marriage and not against Mary for abducting Edward.

News reports about the trial are unclear about Mary and Edward's role in their elopement/abduction. The evidence offered that Edward and Mary were 'prepared one night, for elopement' suggests that they were either both passive participants or

[57] *Caledonian Mercury*, 20 March 1802, 'A Runaway Marriage, 3.
[58] *Morning Post and Gazetteer*, 17 March 1802.
[59] Ibid.

were both abducted and forced to marry.[60] There is no suggestion that Edward offered any physical resistance on his journey to Gretna Green. The Counsel for the prosecution:

> commented at great length; on the enormity of the offence of seducing or forcing a young man under age, of weak intellects, not master of himself, into a marriage against the will of those who were his natural guardians, and who were best able to guide his conduct.[61]

The main legal principles associated with the crime of abduction feature in these news reports. Edward was non-complicit in an elopement because he was the victim of violence, mentally impaired, and in his minority and so not lawfully able to consent. All this evidence would suggest that Bacon Frank had a substantial case. However, the judge advised him to surrender the case because of the lack of evidence that the marriage was forced:

> A number of witnesses, chiefly post-boys and persons on the road to Gretna Green, were called to prove the case; but nothing was made out to establish a conspiracy.
>
> Mr. PARK, for the Defendants, reprobated the prosecution in the strongest terms, and represented the conduct of the Defendants as perfectly proper. He denied that young Frank was of weak intellects, and said that the marriage was sufficiently equal, and turned out very happy.[62]

Bacon Frank accepted the judge's advice: 'The defendants were of course *acquitted*, to the great joy of one of the more numerous and brilliant assemblages, that ever were present at the York Assizes. All the gentry from Doncaster, and its neighbourhood, were present.'[63] Thus, Bacon Frank sacrificed his son to preserve his

[60] *Caledonian Mercury*, 20 March 1802, 'A Runaway Marriage, 3.
[61] *Lancaster Gazetteer,* 27 March 1802, 'A Runaway Marriage', 4.
[62] *Morning Chronicle;* 18 March 1802, 'News', 3.
[63] *Morning Post and Gazetteer*, 17 March 1802, 'A Runaway Marriage', 3.

own reputation. The case fell because the prosecution could not prove forcible abduction. The newspapers were unforgiving: 'The conduct of Mr. Frank, sn. in bringing forward the prosecution, is much blamed.'[64]

It is now not possible to judge whether Edward Frank was abducted or consented to an elopement but Bacon Frank's decision to drop his prosecution illustrates the difficulty in proving abduction and forced marriage. The case demonstrates the way in which abduction was not a single crime but was defined through a combination of social contexts and legal discourses such as: reputational damage; the pressure of a gossiping public; exposure by the press; the opposing personalities of Edward and Mary, and the destination of an inheritance. The legal argument, that Edward might have been coerced into an irregular marriage in Scotland as a means to steal his fortune, was submerged beneath the pressure to conform to society's expectations of the man as the authoritative figure.

These historical cases illustrate the ambiguity associated with abduction and its strong relationship to clandestine marriage. An heir or heiress abducted for their fortunes and forced into marriage in a private ceremony might find themselves in a valid marriage because they could not prove that they had not been complicit in their abduction. The successful prosecutions did not rely on making this distinction. They involved the victim's clear legal status as a ward of court or clear acts of physical violence. Only Frank's prosecution relied on circumstantial evidence and he is advised against going to trial. We shall see later that Edward Frank's position is analogous to the position of women who complained of abduction.

[64] Ibid.

The fictionalisation of the legal principles of abduction

The true-life situations of Mary Pearce, Jacobina Moir, and Mary Sowerby are fictionalised in novels. David Punter observes that 'Eighteenth-century fiction is obsessed with the law: with its operations, with its justifications, with its limits.' [65] Indeed, judicial discourse is part of the fabric of eighteenth-century fiction. Sham, clandestine, and forced marriage appear frequently in novels. Beth Swan argues that the function of eighteenth-century novels written by women was to inform other women about the law: 'sharing concerns regarding law, suggesting ways forward, questioning the legal and thus the social status quo, and perhaps clarifying points of law'.[66] Susan Glover agrees with Swan's view. She argues that as women were unable to study law, 'the reading and writing of fiction' was 'an avenue that was open to them'.[67] I agree with these views and suggest that novels offer an opportunity for women to understand their legal position in relation to abduction.

Punter describes the depiction of the law in eighteenth-century fiction as a spectrum ranging from realistic representation that accords with historical record to legal principles as indicators of emotional attitudes:

> a range of perceptions of this varied and striated reality, which we can and must judge, certainly, against what we know of historical fact, but which should also retain our interest for the sake of the repeated representations which it offers, which at the very least serve as evidence of attitudes, anxieties, and fears of the time.[68]

---

[65] David Punter, 'Fictional Representation of the Law in the Eighteenth Century', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 16.1 (Autumn, 1982), 47-74 (47).
[66] Beth Swan, *Fictions of Law: An Investigation of the Law in Eighteenth-Century English Fiction* (New York: Peter Lang, 1997), 21.
[67] Glover, 134.
[68] Punter, 74.

Swan argues for the historical accuracy of legal discourse in eighteenth-century fiction: 'fictional predicaments that have been taken as romantic or melodramatic, are often grounded in the precise, actual practices of eighteenth-century law'.[69] She gives as an example Eugenia Tyrold's irregular marriage to a fortune hunter in Frances Burney's *Camilla*. Swan shows how Burney used 'legal vocabulary and reveals detailed awareness of the relevant laws' in the depiction of Eugenia's abduction and forced marriage at Gretna Green.[70] Eugenia cannot 'deny, that force […] was used, to repel all her efforts for obtaining help, and to remove her into a chaise'.[71] The point here is that there was evidence to support a prosecution but Eugenia's notion of marriage fostered by her idealised view of society results in her refusal to seek legal redress:

> Mr. Tyrold required to hear nothing more, to establish a prosecution, and to seize her, publickly, from Bellamy. But from this she recoiled. 'No, my dear Father,' she continued, 'the die is cast! And I am his! Solemn has been my vow! sacred I must hold it!' (805)

Swan notes that 'Eugenia's abduction is a familiar narrative strategy, a dramatic image of female vulnerability, but the vocabulary and the legal detail reveal it to be something more than this; her vulnerability is clearly derived from law.'[72]

Burney's novel dissects social situations and reveals women as vulnerable where they expect men to behave as social convention dictates. Thus, Eugenia obeys the vicious Bellamy and maintains her idealised understanding of marriage by

[69] Swan, 11.
[70] Ibid, 52.
[71] Frances Burney, *Camilla or a Picture of Youth*, (1796) ed. by Edward A. Bloom and Lillian D. Bloom (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972; reissued 2009), 805. Further references are given after quotations in the text.
[72] Swan, 53.

accepting culpability for Bellamy's actions and refusing to complain about her abduction and forcible marriage. Eugenia's predicament reveals the prejudice inherent in abduction law that requires the victim to establish non-compliance with the criminal act of abduction, which is itself difficult to define. The law could not protect women with property from exploitation.

Fiction, however, is imaginative fantasy and Burney's heroine survives her abduction and eventually marries the man of her choice whilst the villain dies an unpleasant death. Burney depicts women as constrained by a society in which they could not prosecute for abduction without compromising their reputation or personal principles. But her portrait of Eugenia also depicts women as resilient in adversity. Rebecca Probert makes this point: 'women were not—and are not—inevitably passive victims of either individual men or the collective male might of the law'.[73]

The fantastic elements in *Camilla* (which I discuss in more detail in chapter five) align the novel with the gothic romances of Ann Radcliffe, whose novels are also thoughtful about the legal position of women. Punter argues that Radcliffe's novels represent 'the face of terror which the law appears to wear for those enmeshed in its toils'.[74] His point is that fear of the law heightened gothic terror. The view that the law is to be feared is important to my argument that the abduction plot challenges the social structure underpinning patriarchy. Women feared the law because it so often proved to be prejudiced against them. I suggest that the complexity of eighteenth-century abduction law made it an uncertain means of

[73] Probert, 'Impact of the Marriage Act', 259.
[74] Punter, 74.

redress and that therefore women looked to abduction plots in novels for strategies to resist male violence and the greed that so often motivated them.

Testing the exemplary heroine: *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* (1789)

The eighteenth-century legal requirement for an abductee to be chaste, resilient, and non-complicit is tested in the abduction scenes of Radcliffe's first novel, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* (1789). This novel has generally been of interest as an early anticipation of Radcliffe's literary style, such as picturesque description of landscape and architecture, plot structure, gothic characterisation, and moral tone. Many scholars point to the novel's doubled structure.[75] Sue Chaplin argues that this doubling structure represents the opposing elements of the law. Athlin is 'Blackstone's "Gothic Castle"' representing 'the location of legitimate genealogy […] bequeathing […] a coherent body of authentic national law' in opposition to Dunbayne, which represents 'illegitimate tyranny'.[76] She argues that Radcliffe's first novel establishes women as powerless: 'The misery of mothers, daughters and sisters is a persistent theme […] as is their inability to influence the causes of it.'[77] In Radcliffe's first novel, women are presented as without an 'active juridical identity'.[78] Chaplin argues that Radcliffe's later novels develop this theme and the *Romance of the Forest* (1791) marks a movement 'towards legitimate juridical identity' for women.[79] I suggest that *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* is also thoughtful about the representation of women's vulnerability to abduction.

[75] See Alison Millbank's introduction to *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*.
[76] Sue Chaplin, *Gothic and the Rule of Law 1764-1820* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan 2007), 97.
[77] Ibid, 99.
[78] Ibid, 98.
[79] Ibid, 100.

Abduction and unlawful confinement are prominent in the novel. Its story comprises Gothic motifs in a complicated plot featuring two-dimensional characters in a romanticised medieval Scotland.[80] All the female characters are confined, abducted, or unlawfully imprisoned. All survive their ordeals and the narrative is one of moral fortitude rewarded with financial security and emotional stability through dynastic marriage.

The abduction scenes are a mix of medieval marriage customs and eighteenth-century legal principles. The heroine (Mary) represents female aristocracy and cannot choose her husband because her purpose is to enhance the family's social position, a situation that would resonate with eighteenth-century readers. Mary's marriage choices relate directly to her function as a valuable social commodity. The novel displaces eighteenth-century social customs on to a medieval past thus revealing contemporary society as clinging to feudal practices rather than moving forward to an enlightened future.[81]

The heroine's principal scenes are the abduction ordeals, which indicate the importance that Radcliffe placed on the abduction motif. I suggest that these scenes fictionalise the legal principles that require abduction to be linked to sexual

[80] Ann B. Tracey identifies nineteen gothic motifs in the novel, *The Gothic Novel 1790-1830: Plot Summaries and Index to Motifs* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1981), 133. The motifs are: abduction, birthmarks, dissimilar brothers, caves, confinement (extra-legal), corpses, secret doors, subterranean passages, dungeons, fainting females, emotionally induced illness, mysterious lights, mysterious music, miniatures, the noble peasant, loss of reputation, shipwreck, storms, and vows of vengeance.

[81] JoEllen DeLucia suggests that the novel portrays the two sides of Scottish Enlightenment. She argues that the representation of women is on a sliding scale from the violence of Dunbayne (where women are captive and betrayed), to the benevolence of Aithlin (where Matilda's rule results in a strong and heroic succession) and that Mary is caught between 'rival historical forces', 'From the Female Gothic to a Feminist Theory of History: Ann Radcliffe and the Scottish Enlightenment', *The Eighteenth Century*, 50.1 (Spring, 2009), 101-115 (102).

aggression. The motive for Mary's abduction is given as her physical attractiveness, which incites ungovernable passion in both villains. The narrative does not directly suggest that the perpetrators are motivated by the heroine's virginity, although that is implicit in Mary's description as chaste. The legal requirements that an abduction victim must resist her attackers to the utmost of her ability and be in fear of her life are present. Mary tries to run away and offers persistent vocal resistance and her aristocratic social class supplies the financial imperative. These scenes demonstrate the high level of proof required by the justice system to pass the test of non-complicity where the motive is lust. The virtuous heroine is eventually rescued in a fantasy resolution and survives her ordeal with her reputation intact. However, this fantasy rescue emphasises the point that abduction is a difficult crime to survive. I suggest that the scenes fictionalise the legal principles of eighteenth-century abduction law and this makes them realistic elements in an otherwise fantasy narrative.

The novel's reception history shows that Radcliffe was criticised for her lack of historical and cultural accuracy: 'There is some fancy and much romantic imagery in the conduct of this story; but our pleasure would have been more unmixed had our author preserved better the manners and costume of the Highlands'.[82] The novel was also criticised for its improbable plot, which was described as not founded 'in nature' and was 'insipid, if not disgustful'.[83] Nonetheless, medieval marriage customs are portrayed realistically. R. B. Outhwaite pointed out that the medieval approach to

[82] *The Critical Review*, September 1789, quoted in *The Critical Response to Ann Radcliffe*, ed. by Deborah D. Rogers (London: Greenwood Press, 1994), 1.
[83] *The Monthly Review*, December 1789, quoted in Deborah D. Rogers, 1.

marriage in England was predicated on political or economic reasons, 'the necessity of willing consent contrasted with the coercion frequently encountered in that medieval world, where marriages were sometimes made by kings, feudal lords and parents for blatantly political or economic ends'.[84] This medieval marriage principle is fictionalised in Mary's reluctant acquiescence to the evil Baron's blackmail demands that she marry him to save her brother from death at the hands of that tyrant.

The abduction scenes are narrated through familiar Gothic motifs and the poetic prose and emotive language disguise the discourse of violence and sexual aggression inherent in both abduction scenes.[85] In the first scene, Mary is abducted whilst riding in the 'soft serenity of evening' (19). She is alarmed by a 'glittering of arms' (20). Her attempt to escape is driven by fear, 'Almost fainting she flew on the wings of terror' but she is 'borne away through the intricate mazes of the woods' by men who maintain an 'inflexible silence' to 'a horrible cavern' where 'she lost all signs of existence' until she 'unclosed her eyes' and beheld her rescuer (20). Her assailants are 'ravishers' (30) whilst Mary is wise beyond her years, 'just seventeen' with 'accomplishments of riper years, with the touching simplicity of youth' (4). The perpetrator is the representation of unredeemable evil unable to govern his emotions: 'an incidental view he once obtained of her, raised a passion in his soul, which the turbulence of his character would not suffer to be extinguished' (19). Thus,

[84] Outhwaite, 1. Outhwaite states that the abduction of minors was not prevented by legislation until 1653 in England when the perpetrators would be 'faced with imprisonment on conviction, loss of their estates and, if the marriage was obtained "by violence or fraud" then it was to be null and void', 12.
[85] Milbank points out that 'all the elements that are usually considered Gothic […] were in active use in the eighteenth-century novel before the 1790s', Introduction to *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, viii-ix.

emotional instability is associated with the corrupt man whilst Mary is depicted as emotionally secure. Locating emotional instability in the evil Baron disassociates Mary from any suggestion of culpability for her abduction. She cannot be the reason for the Baron's violent passion because he is already emotionally unstable.

The context for the second abduction is the heroine's rejection of a marriage proposal sanctioned by her family. This situation reflects the eighteenth-century convention that a woman could refuse a marriage proposal rather than the medieval practice of compliance with the dynastic requirements of her feudal lord. The principal elements of the first scene: violence, vocalised fear, and unconsciousness are repeated. However, this second abduction is more complex because the perpetrator is a mixed character. John Andrew Stoler argues that Santmorin is a 'developing' character 'with genuine internal conflicts and a degree of psychological verisimilitude'.[86] Santmorin changes over time from an acceptable future husband to a violent aggressor: 'The stranger had contemplated the lovely form of Mary with increasing admiration, since the first hour he beheld her; this admiration was now confirmed into love' (80). As the plot unfolds, Santmorin becomes associated with violence and uncontrollable passion that 'impelled' him 'with irresistible fury' (106) to abduct Mary. This second scene focuses attention on the duplicity of men who manipulate the normal codes of behaviour to deceive women. But Mary is also implicated in Santmorin's downfall by the suggestion that his emotional turmoil is

[86] John Andrew Stoler, *Ann Radcliffe: The Novel of Suspense and Terror* (New York: Arno Press, 1980), 57. Stoler argues that Santmorin is close to Lovelace in characterisation because he has cultivated a good reputation, is in love with Mary, his lust makes him kidnap her, and he shows remorse for his actions, 117-118.

caused by her beauty (that is to say, it was not a pre-existing condition as is the case of the evil Baron). These scenes again fictionalise the legal requirements that the victim be non-complicit, subject to extreme violence, and unable to resist. However, in this second abduction scene Mary could be suspected of culpability given the greater depth of characterisation associated with Santmorin and the implication that his irrational behaviour is the direct result of her physical beauty.

The respective fates of Radcliffe's villains reflect the penalties available under abduction law. The first assailant, the personification of unredeemable evil, admits his crime but shows no remorse and therefore dies in agony: 'I have understood virtue, but I have loved vice' (89). He suffers the ultimate punishment under the law for abduction and intent to rape, which is death. However, the second perpetrator is allowed to live as befitting the more noble elements of his character, those that 'diffused happiness, and the mild dignity of virtue to all around him' (83). He shows remorse and is an object of pity: 'grieved that a soul like the Count's should ever be under the dominion of vice' (106). This resolution also absolves the heroine from causing death by beauty. Each abduction ordeal is resolved in the same fantastic manner, rescue by the noble peasant who is eventually revealed to be the usurped heir. This fantasy ending implies that only in fiction is there escape from marriage based on financial value.

Radcliffe's novel suggests that physical beauty, high social status, and economic value conspire to make women vulnerable to abduction rather than shield them from violence. Mary symbolises wealth, social isolation, and sexual innocence. She represents the truly modest woman whose culpability for a crime with strong

sexual associations would seem impossible and yet her abductor is pitied and unpunished. I read these abduction scenes as offering a thoughtful critique of abduction law. They demonstrate that the legal principle requiring women to prove non-complicity is an extremely difficult legal test to pass.

Chapter Two: Abduction as a euphemism: scandal and criminality

'Abduction' does not refer to any single continuously defined act. I have been arguing that abduction in its legal context was not a single crime but was associated with multiple criminal activities. In this chapter, I argue that beyond this legal context there was an awareness that 'abduction' was a euphemism; a convenient excuse to preserve a reputation; a means to disguise the true reason for a prolonged and unexplained absence such as a sexual intrigue, abortion, or to give birth privately. This shifting territory makes 'abduction' difficult to define. I illustrate my argument with newspaper accounts of missing women and fictional parallels to such true-life incidents.

J. M. S. Tomkins observed in 1932 that there was a relationship between the historical record of abduction as reported in newspapers and the abduction motif in fiction: 'Some of the incidents which occur most frequently, notably duels and abductions, can be paralleled again and again in contemporary newspapers and magazines'.[1] Tomkins suggested that 'too much weight need not be given' to the comparison between newspapers and novels because 'novelists were not painting nature, but outdoing her'.[2] In this chapter, I test the argument that fictional abduction plots are more complex than true-life accounts.

I take an historicist approach and interrogate contemporary newspapers to argue that 'abduction' had a meaning in social and cultural discourse that associated

[1] J. M. S. Tomkins, *The Popular Novel in England 1770-1800* (London: Methuen, 1932), 61.
[2] Ibid.

reports of missing women with gossip and innuendo. It is now not possible to determine whether the men and women in the news reports that follow were actually victims of abduction and so I draw a distinction between those reports that describe what appear to be cases of abduction and those where abduction may be disguising something else. I consider the reporting of missing women in newspapers to be continuous with the unregulated public sphere of coffeehouse gossip, social satire, and fictional 'letters to the editor' about loosely disguised society figures.[3] I argue that where abduction is suspected, newspapers teach that a woman's reputation might be redeemed only if she avoids seduction.

I draw on three case histories to illustrate the general suspicion that pervades claims of abduction. The first is the famous case of Elizabeth Canning (1753) who claimed abduction but was eventually transported to America for perjury. The second case is that of Ann Brookhouse (1798) who also claimed abduction but could not identify her abductors. Brookhouse's story was disparaged by the press. The third case is the 'national scandal' of Clementina Clerke (1791-94), a young Scottish heiress who disappeared from her boarding school and married Richard Perry, local surgeon and apothecary, at Gretna Green. Their flight, pursuit, and Perry's trial for abduction was played out under intense newspaper scrutiny and made the Perrys celebrities.[4] Newspapers questioned whether Clerke consented to elope and therefore took an active part in a sexual adventure or was abducted against her will. I argue

[3] Clare Brant points out that: 'As segregated forums of talk, women's tea-tables could compete with men's coffee-houses: hence the masculine interest in belittling them, and hence too perhaps a feminine interest in representing them as places of relaxation from which faction was excluded', 'Speaking of Women: Scandal and the Law in the mid-eighteenth century', Brant and Purkiss, 242-266 (248).

[4] The pursuit was led by Selena Mills, who ran the school on behalf of Hannah More.

that the reporting of these three cases is an extreme example of the social perception that 'abduction' was an equivocal term.

In the final section of this chapter, I suggest that news reports about missing women are intertextual references to the abduction motif in fiction. I argue that fictional abduction plots and scenes build on a shared understanding about young women who are attracted to unscrupulous men and this makes 'abduction' appear as a familiar hazard and normalises an otherwise dangerous situation. I take as my text Charlotte Smith's *Emmeline, the Orphan of the Castle*.[5] I read the many scenes of elopement, abduction, and sudden disappearances in this novel as a taxonomy of female sexual behaviour that enumerates the various causes of a woman's sudden disappearance. All are eventually revealed to relate to the violent and immoral activities of men. Smith endorsed the ambiguity of such disappearances by describing her titular heroine as having 'no notion of the variety of motives' (261) such absences imply. I suggest that these abduction scenes disrupt the narrative of romance to depict female agency in the face of male aggression and to suggest that a woman's sudden disappearance rarely has a simple explanation.

Newspapers, abduction, and coffeehouse gossip

We are familiar with eighteenth-century newspapers as important sources of information that influenced public opinion.[6] In the discussion that follows, I argue

[5] Charlotte Smith, *Emmeline, the Orphan of the Castle* (1788), ed. by Loraine Fletcher (Toronto: Broadview Press, 2003). Further references are given after quotations in the text.
[6] On reading newspapers and their place in eighteenth-century culture see Hannah Barker, *Newspapers, Politics and English Society 1695-1855* (Harlow: Longman, 2000) and Uriel Heyd, *Reading Newspapers: press and public in eighteenth-century Britain and America*, SVEC 2012-13 (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2012). For a discussion of coffee house culture, see Heyd, 'News Craze: Public Sphere and the Eighteenth-Century Theatrical Depiction of Newspaper Culture', *The Eighteenth Century*, 56.1 (2015), 59-84.

that the crime of abduction is not easily legible in newspapers. My research of eighteenth-century newspapers illustrates the difficulty in establishing a taxonomy of criminal behaviour relating to abduction through the newspaper record. I suggest that journalistic discourse illustrates the complexity of gender assumptions in eighteenth-century culture and society.

Samuel Johnson said that, 'Every-body must allow that our News-papers, by the materials they afford for Discourse and Speculation, contribute very much to the Emolument of Society; their Cheapness brings them into universal Use; their Variety adapts them to every one's Taste'.[7] Figure 6 depicts a coffeehouse scene in which men read a diverse range of newspapers. The *Daily Advertiser* and *The Morning Post* contained mainly advertisements. *The London Chronicle* carried a greater range of content and included news items and literary reviews. (Its reader is the only one referred to as 'elderly', perhaps indicating the readership of this particular paper.) The *London Gazette* carried government notices as well as foreign and domestic news. It is regarded as the oldest English newspaper and is still published today. The title of the *Evening Post* is usually prefaced by the place of its publication. The *London Evening Post* was strongly anti-government during the editorship of its probable founder, Richard Nutt.[8] These newspapers feature in my research into news reports of abduction. We know that newspapers were widely available and consumed

[7] This quote is taken from Samuel Johnson's preface to the collected edition of the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1740 and quoted in Bob Clarke, *From Grub Street to Fleet Street: An Illustrated History of English Newspapers to 1899* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2004), 74.
[8] All details about the content of these newspapers have been taken from the *Newsvault* Database.

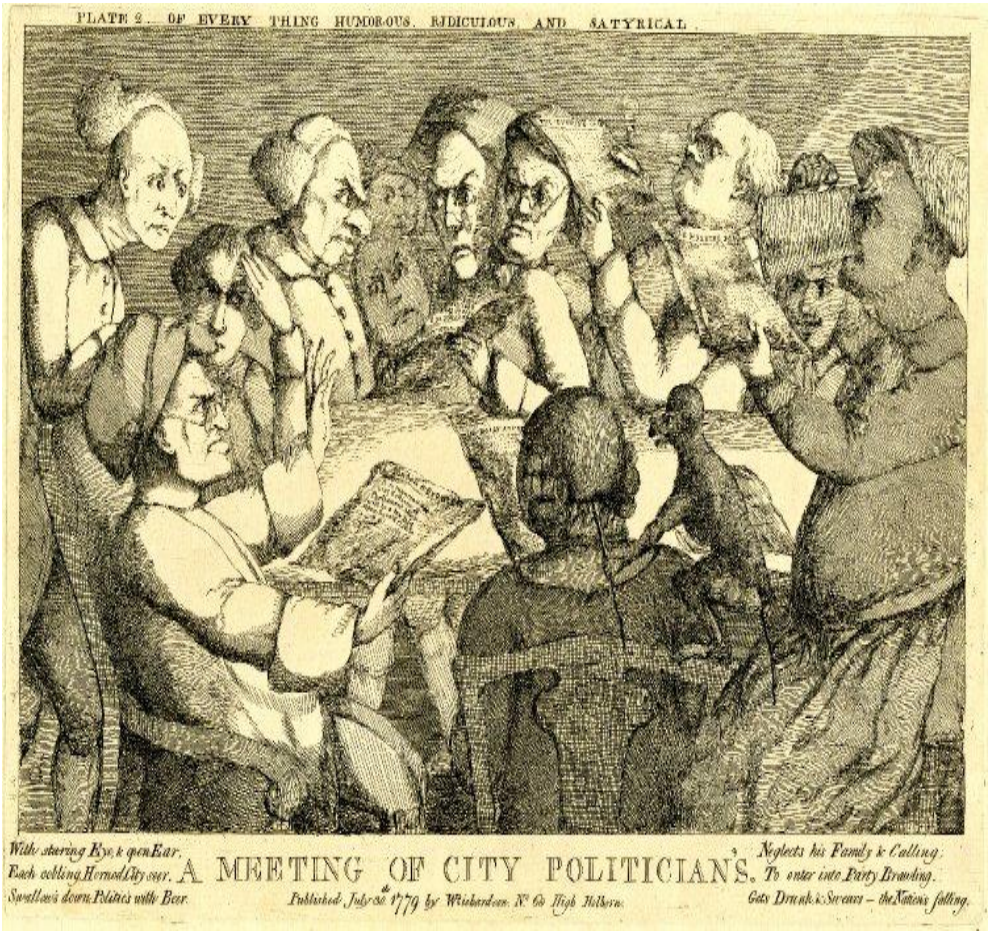


Figure 6: Men seated round a table, drinking, smoking, and reading newspapers. On the right. an artisan,[…] reads 'The Morning Post'. Next him a man […] reads 'The Daily Adver[tiser]', […] an elderly man reads 'The London Chronicle', […] one man reads 'The Evening Post', another the 'London Gazette', 30 July 1779.[9]

by a socially diverse readership.[10] Today, we can read and compare eighteenth-century newspapers in the digital environment and we understand them as an eclectic mix of information, entertainment, and gossip. They all contain a mixture of foreign and domestic news, reports of crimes, accidents, births, deaths, and marriages,

[9] @ Trustees of the British Museum. Registration number 1865,0610.1130.
[10] See Clarke's discussion about the social diversity of newspaper readers, 74. Similarly, Barker argues that 'newspaper readers became both more numerous and more socially diverse between 1695 and 1855', 63. Altick also argued that the 'need for information and guidance in everyday affairs' stimulated people to read, 45.

advertisements and announcements from the book publishing trade. Many contain poetry and short narrative fiction and some include full reports of parliamentary debates and detailed law reports.[11] Practically all report scandal and gossip about those in fashionable life. However, it is not clear that newspapers distinguished between factual events, and gossip and speculation. We know that newspapers sought to be considered as 'trustworthy, unbiased vehicles for information dissemination' and as such they mediated true life events for their readers but the version of 'true life' they offer is not always trustworthy.[12] As Henry Fielding observed, 'When Facts and Rumours fail, they have an inexhaustible Fund of Scandal to supply the Vacancy.'[13]

This mix of fact and gossip helps to create a discourse of suspicion about missing women. Newspaper commentary about missing women generally conformed to the cultural attitude that a woman's sexual life should be controlled and supressed. For example, the *London Daily Post and General Advertiser* reported the abduction and forced marriage of a young aristocrat in the following terms: 'Yesterday a Person, who lately married the Sister of a Baronet, was committed Prisoner to the Fleet, the Lady being under Age, and seduced by several Methods from her Guardian.'[14] The phrase 'seduced by several Methods' is ambiguous. The piece assumes reader familiarity with the narrative of a naïve aristocratic young woman

[11] Until 1747 and then again once parliamentary reporting was permitted without penalty in 1771.
[12] Hyed, *Reading Newspapers*, 163.
[13] Henry Fielding, 'The Champion: Containing a Series of Papers, Humorous, Moral, Political and Critical', *Eighteenth Century Journals*, 1.16 (February 1740), 274-281 (280).
[14] *London Daily Post and General Advertiser*, 20 March 1741, 'London', 1. The report is sandwiched between a short paragraph about a parade of free masons and a sentence about the expected recovery of the Lord Mayor from illness. Placing the report between two verifiable events gives validity to the report.

seduced by a fortune hunter. However, other interpretations are also possible: this young woman may have eloped with a man her guardians considered undesirable or she may have been taken against her will and married by force.

Newspaper pieces rarely challenge the established social order of a hegemonic aristocracy, an upwardly mobile class of merchants, the subordination of women, and the depiction of female sexuality outwith marriage as aberrant behaviour. Male victims of abduction are more likely to be reported as non-complicit than female victims and excused from culpability because they exhibited traits normally associated with women, such as emotional instability and mental incapacity. It is now not possible to determine whether the men and women reported in the following news reports were victims of abduction in the legal sense as many are too short to contain sufficient information to make that judgement. However, it is striking that where the victims are women, a discourse of suspicion pervades accounts of her sudden disappearance.

Abduction and criminal behaviour: the role of the newspaper

Novels and newspapers are, of course, obviously different in scale and intention. The purpose of abduction narratives in newspapers is to provide information (whether accurate or not) and, unlike novels, a news report would rarely reach a conclusion or report the motivations of all those involved. Rather, newspapers stop reporting a story when it is no longer newsworthy so that the final outcome of an abduction would probably not be recorded. [15] The language used in newspapers to describe a

[15] Hayden White describes this distinction: 'The chronicle, by contrast, often seems to wish to tell a story, aspires to narrativity, but typically fails to achieve it. More specifically, the chronicle usually is marked by a failure to achieve narrative closure. It does not so much conclude as simply terminate.'

woman's sudden disappearance often assumes criminal behaviour through the use of terms such as 'kidnapp'd', 'decoy'd, 'conspiracy', 'forced', 'seized', and 'forcibly carried'.

This appears to be the case in the following example. This newspaper piece concerns a nobly born libertine attempting to force young women into a brothel. These women resist abduction by their own strenuous efforts. The piece is important because it challenges the actions of the aristocratic class by calling for an inquiry and for justice. There is no assumption that the women involved are complicit in their abduction or culpable through their behaviour or dress:

> BRUTAL VIOLENCE—A circumstance happened in the neighbourhood of Vauxhall, at the recent celebration of a Jewish wedding […] which calls for inquiry and justice. It seems that a certain nobleman, not distinguished for the morality of his conduct, was in a pleasure-boat with a party of his friends, […] were particularly struck with the appearance of three young women […]. The nobleman, and two or three of his party, attempted to force the girls into the boat, but did not succeed, and the latter went to another part of the gardens. They were followed, however, suddenly seized, and carried into the vessel, and the boatman ordered to proceed to Richmond. The violent screams of the girls at length induced the head of the party to order the boat back to Westminster bridge, where two hackney coaches were brought, into each of which one of the young women was placed, and the third was taken into a phaeton by the nobleman himself, […]. The girls in the coaches, in spite of all attempts to restrain them, made such a noise as to draw people about them, and, with a desperate effort, one of them escaped, but the other was taken to a house of a certain description in the neighbourhood of Soho; luckily, however, she caught hold of the iron railing at the door, and, by the assistance of the passengers, was enabled to escape. The third girl, hearing that her companions had escaped, threw herself, encumbered as she was, out of the phaeton, and was also rescued by the efforts of the passengers in the street.[16]

Hayden White, 'The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality', quoted in *Modern Literary Theory*: *A Reader*, ed. by Philip Rice and Patricia Waugh, 4th ed. (London: Arnold, 2001; repr. 2002), 268.

[16] Appendix A, Table 2, no. 46 (1811).

The point here is women's vulnerability to a degenerate aristocracy. The narrative is of an immoral upper class with a casual attitude to sexual violence along with an apparent unconcern about flouting the rule of law.[17] The call for this incident to be investigated suggests that this newspaper was prepared to challenge the political establishment and align itself with the victims. However, the aristocrat and his companions are not named and, despite the presence of helpful bystanders, the perpetrators are not reported as restrained. This newspaper's challenge to authority, therefore, had its limits. Indeed, what appears to be a clear case of abduction as a prelude to sexual assault might not meet all the legal requirements for a prosecution for abduction if a financial motive could not be established. These women, therefore, probably had no legal redress for their ordeal.

In the next example, a rich man is the victim of an abduction attempt in which a woman is the principal offender thus reversing the normal gender roles. In this piece, we can see that the discourse associated with male victims of abduction differs from that of female victims and reflects the gendered patriarchal structure of male authority and female subjugation. The male victim is described as exhibiting the feminine attributes of emotional and physical weakness and intellectual incapacity. The financial motive is clear. However, unlike many female victims, he is named and there is no assumption that he might have been complicit:

> A HYMENAL PLOT A few days since a conspiracy was formed against a young gentleman […] of the name of Dansie, heir to a great fortune, of considerable family connections, but unfortunately of very weak intellects. He became acquainted with an artful woman turned of forty. The youth is no more

[17] Timothy McInerney describes the reverence in which British society held the peerage and the aristocratic life of privilege, 'The Better Sort: Nobility and Human Variety in Eighteenth-Century Great Britain', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 38.1 (2015), 47-61.

> than eighteen. Ten days ago they seduced him from the school; and detained him privately, […] it is with pleasure we inform the public, he was on Sunday discovered […].
>
> Monday was the day on which they intended to carry him off […].
>
> The woman and he were to have embarked in a Scotch vessel for Aberdeen; to disguise him, they had tied up his hair; had provided a livery […]; he was likewise to have been *Othello'd*, having the apparatus ready to black his face, and pass him as a servant. In Aberdeen they designed to have secreted him till he and the woman were married. When the officers discovered him, he was quite overjoyed.
>
> His father had gone to Gretna green supposing they might have taken him thither, and letters were sent to all the sea-port towns.[18]

These two reports demonstrate the aristocracy's contempt for convention and the gender ideology that assumes male victims of abduction must be intellectually weak and emotionally unstable.

In the next examples, we can see the patriarchal attitude towards the abduction of wives by their husbands. Neither piece condemns such action and both women find the means to escape, at least temporarily. The terms used, 'kidnapp'd' and 'decoy', are often associated with abduction in news reports. However, it is not clear that the husbands have committed a criminal act:

> We hear that the Lady of a Gentleman of Ireland was kidnapp'd lately by her Husband in the Tower Hamlets, and carried to a Nunnery in France, from whence she escaped last Week, and intends to sue him for a separate Maintenance.

> On Tuesday a Person endeavoured to decoy his Wife to a Madhouse, under Pretence of carrying her to Sadler's Wells; but she overhearing him ordered the Coachman to drive to Chelsea, immediately scream'd out; and, on making her Complaint, and appearing to be perfectly in her Senses, she was taken into a Shop, and from thence carried home to her Friends.[19]

[18] Appendix A, Table 2, no. 33 (1788).
[19] Appendix A, Table 2, nos. 12 and 13 (1753).

We know that the law permitted 'a husband to restrain a wife of her liberty in case of any gross misbehaviour'.[20] Bannet points out that domestic tyranny was the norm: 'Civil law […] assumed that it was the wife's duty to suffer without complaint whatever cruelties her husband subjected her to, short of actually killing her.'[21] Ellen Malenas Ledoux also points out that eighteenth-century husbands 'looking to control or to extort property from rebellious wives' resorted to incarcerating them in 'private lunatic asylums' and that the practice was sufficiently widespread for Parliament to legislate, resulting in the 'Act for Regulating Private Madhouses' in 1774.[22]

These two reports depict female agency in the face of (possibly) lawful male aggression. The first is a familiar narrative of incarceration and escape from a convent, which is a plot found in many Gothic novels.[23] Indeed, the victim's decision to sue for a separation is a solution that Mary Wollstonecraft postulated as one possible ending for her unfinished novel, *Maria or the Wrongs of Women* (1797). The second report suggests a more insidious form of abduction, that of abduction by deception rather than violence. It is not clear to whom the victim complained, how she arrived at the shop, nor how she was taken to her friends. However, it is possible that she remained at risk, 'the husband is also intitled to recover damages in an action on the case against such as persuade and intice the wife to live separate from him without a sufficient cause'.[24] These women's actions put them in opposition to

[20] Blackstone, I:433.
[21] Eve Tavor Bannet, *The Domestic Revolution: Enlightenment Feminisms and the Novel* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 26.
[22] Ellen Malenas Ledoux, *Social Reform in Gothic Writing* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 3.
[23] In Tracey's research on recurring motifs in Gothic novels, there are sixteen novels (from a total of 138 published between 1790 and 1811) that link abduction and convents.
[24] Blackstone, III:139.

society's expectations of a dutiful wife. They depict abduction as a true-life hazard that women could only escape by extreme action.

The last newspaper piece in this section about the difficulty in determining abduction as a crime in its legal sense is an advertisement from the *Daily Advertiser* of 28 November 1782. It is an ideal item for a newspaper because it overlays family concern with gossip and innuendo. The advertisement states with certainty that a young woman had been 'forcibly carried away' but declares her the victim of mistaken identity. This abduction does not appear to have been reported as a serious case of criminal activity. The *Daily Advertiser* was a popular newspaper with a circulation of over 2,500 a day by the mid-1740s thus the advertisement would be sure to reach a large audience. It was distributed free to places of business and coffeehouses.[25] The advertisement states that this young woman is the innocent victim of another woman's assignation and is a plea for her to be rescued. However, the editor did not afford the advertisement any particular prominence. Although it appears on the front page, it is printed amongst other advertisements so that the extraordinary is mixed with the mundane:

> YOUNG LADY lost. Whereas a young Lady was forcibly carried away on Thursday Evening the 7th instant, as she was passing through Lincoln's Inn Fields, and has not since returned; but as it appears from Letters received from the young Lady that she was not the Person intended to be taken; if the Friends of the other Lady who was to have met the Gentleman will convey, by any secret Method they think proper, such information as may lead to a Discovery of the Author of so unwarrantable a Proceeding, they would receive (a Tribute not unacceptable) the Heart-felt Gratitude of a disconsolate Family. Direct to Mr. Campbell, No. 3 Great Shire-Lane.[26]

[25] See the description of the *Daily Advertiser* in the *NewsVault* database.
[26] Appendix A, Table 2, no. 28 (1782).

All these news reports and advertisements suggest violent behaviour: 'seized', 'kidnapp'd', and 'forcibly carried'. However, this last piece is advertised as a sexual adventure rather than as criminal activity. Indeed, none of the events is reported as a criminal act and it is not clear whether any would result in a prosecution for abduction or for any crime associated with abduction, such as sexual assault or financial fraud. This complex legal position is further disrupted by the social perception that 'abduction' could be a euphemism for behaviour that challenged the ideology of the exemplary woman. It is to this issue that I turn to next.

Abduction as a euphemism for sexual intrigue

Many newspapers carried pieces about missing women but these news reports did not necessarily imply violence or criminal activity. For example, an advertisement in the *Daily Advertiser* of 17 October 1796 seeks news of a young woman who 'has not yet come Home'. Another example is a piece in the *Morning Herald* of 17 April 1798 seeking information about the whereabouts of 'two young women who left the house of a Lady in Kensington-square' and assuring them that 'They may depend on being kindly received'.[27] In this next group of reports, the newspaper narrative is one of gossip, scandal, and suspicion rather than criminal behaviour.

We can see the public's unease about stories of abduction in a series of reports from the *Public Ledger or the Daily Register of Commerce and Intelligence* of April 1761 (figures 7, 8 and 9). The story begins with a plea for information about a missing young woman. This is followed by a suggestion that the woman is not

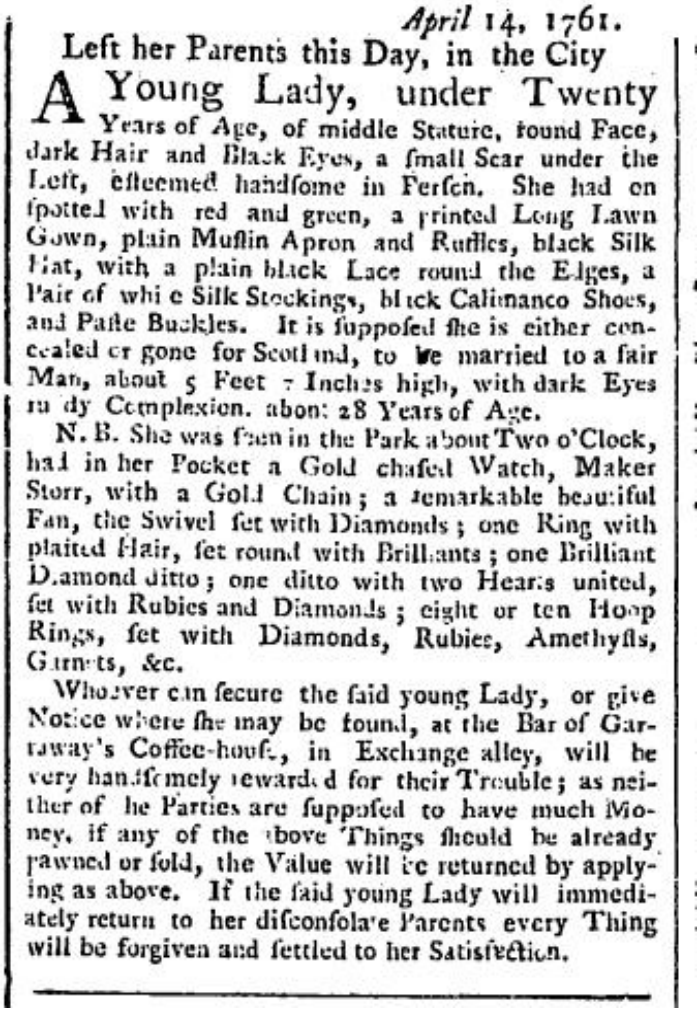
[27] There are examples of such news reports in Appendix A, Table 2, particularly nos. 35 and 37 from which these extracts are taken. Other examples can be found in numbers 2, 3, 4 and 8.

wealthy and then a more emphatic assertion that her disappearance was not voluntary. Finally, there is a direct appeal to the young woman to return, which appears to dispute the preceding claim that she had been forcibly abducted. The narrative of uncertainty these newspaper pieces reveal expose the suspicion that stories of 'abduction' engendered.

The first advertisement is headed 'Left her Parents this Day in the City' (figure 7). 'Left' is qualified in the text as 'either concealed or gone for Scotland, to be married', which assumes that this young woman has eloped. The link with coffeehouse gossip is suggested by giving 'the Bar at Garraway's Coffee-house' as the place where information should be sent. The story reappears two days later but this time as an item of news. It is now associated with criminal behaviour and placed as the first of three items reporting criminal activities. The report repeats the phrase 'concealed or gone for Scotland to be married' and adds the information that 'neither the young lady, nor the party she is suspected to be gone off with, are supposed to have much money' (figure 8). So, abduction for financial gain is dismissed as a possibility.

There is another advertisement on the following page (although the paper does not link them) but this time it begins with an emphatic assertion about the use of force: 'DECOYED, or taken away by Force from her Parents' (figure 9). The level of concern has increased to a direct accusation of violence and the offer of a substantial cash reward. The final paragraph, however, implies more personal reasons for the woman's disappearance. It addresses the young woman directly and assumes the possibility that she retains the ability to act even if she is under coercion:

'her usual Sense of Duty and Affection to her Parents, and the Certainty of her own Distress, by absenting herself, will make her break through any Threats or Allurements, by which she may be at present influenced'. This young woman's family claim that their daughter has been forced away but they also speculate that she might have been seduced into consenting to an elopement.



April 14, 1761.

Left her Parents this Day, in the City

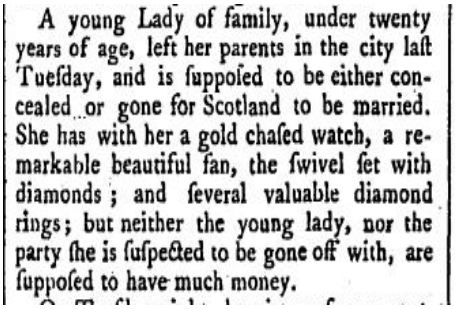
A Young Lady, under Twenty Years of Age, of middle Stature, round Face, dark Hair and Black Eyes, a ſmall Scar under the Left, eſteemed handſome in Perſon. She had on ſpotted with red and green, a printed Long Lawn Gown, plain Muſlin Apron and Ruffles, black Silk Hat, with a plain black Lace round the Edges, a Pair of white Silk Stockings, black Calimanco Shoes, and Paſte Buckles. It is ſuppoſed ſhe is either concealed or gone for Scotland, to be married to a fair Man, about 5 Feet 7 Inches high, with dark Eyes ruddy Complexion, about 28 Years of Age.

N. B. She was ſeen in the Park about Two o'Clock, had in her Pocket a Gold chaſed Watch, Maker Storr, with a Gold Chain; a remarkable beautiful Fan, the Swivel ſet with Diamonds; one Ring with plaited Hair, ſet round with Brilliants; one Brilliant Diamond ditto; one ditto with two Hearts united, ſet with Rubies and Diamonds; eight or ten Hoop Rings, ſet with Diamonds, Rubies, Amethyſts, Garnets, &c.

Whoever can ſecure the ſaid young Lady, or give Notice where ſhe may be found, at the Bar of Garraway's Coffee-houſe, in Exchange alley, will be very handſomely rewarded for their Trouble; as neither of the Parties are ſuppoſed to have much Money, if any of the above Things ſhould be already pawned or ſold, the Value will be returned by applying as above. If the ſaid young Lady will immediately return to her diſconſolate Parents every Thing will be forgiven and ſettled to her Satisfaction.

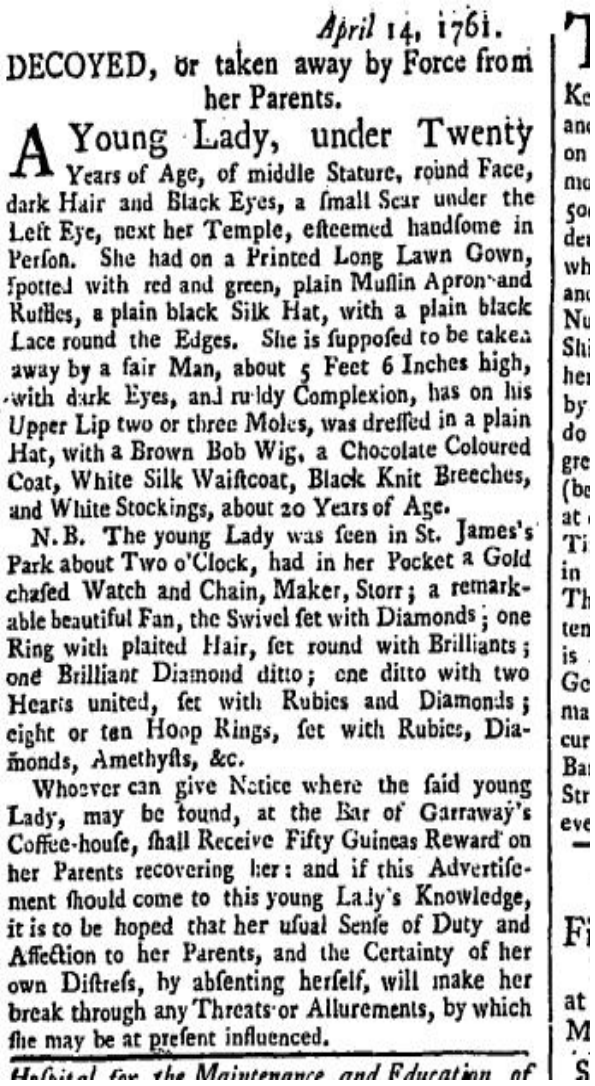
Figure 7: *Public Ledger or the Daily Register of Commerce and Intelligence,* 15 April 1761, 3.[28]

[28] Gale Document Number: Z2001237054 © Copyright Cengage Learning.



A young Lady of family, under twenty years of age, left her parents in the city laſt Tueſday, and is ſuppoſed to be either concealed or gone for Scotland to be married. She has with her a gold chaſed watch, a remarkable beautiful fan, the ſwivel ſet with diamonds; and ſeveral valuable diamond rings; but neither the young lady, nor the party ſhe is ſuſpected to be gone off with, are ſuppoſed to have much money.

Figure 8: *Public Ledger or the Daily Register of Commerce and Intelligence,* 17 April 1761, 2.[29]



April 14, 1761.

DECOYED, or taken away by Force from her Parents.

A Young Lady, under Twenty Years of Age, of middle Stature, round Face, dark Hair and Black Eyes, a ſmall Scar under the Left Eye, next her Temple, eſteemed handſome in Perſon. She had on a Printed Long Lawn Gown, ſpotted with red and green, plain Muſlin Apron and Ruffles, a plain black Silk Hat, with a plain black Lace round the Edges. She is ſuppoſed to be taken away by a fair Man, about 5 Feet 6 Inches high, with dark Eyes, and ruddy Complexion, has on his Upper Lip two or three Moles, was dreſſed in a plain Hat, with a Brown Bob Wig, a Chocolate Coloured Coat, White Silk Waiſtcoat, Black Knit Breeches, and White Stockings, about 20 Years of Age.

N. B. The young Lady was ſeen in St. James's Park about Two o'Clock, had in her Pocket a Gold chaſed Watch and Chain, Maker, Storr; a remarkable beautiful Fan, the Swivel ſet with Diamonds; one Ring with plaited Hair, ſet round with Brilliants; one Brilliant Diamond ditto; one ditto with two Hearts united, ſet with Rubies and Diamonds; eight or ten Hoop Rings, ſet with Rubies, Diamonds, Amethyſts, &c.

Whoever can give Notice where the ſaid young Lady, may be found, at the Bar of Garraway's Coffee-houſe, ſhall Receive Fifty Guineas Reward on her Parents recovering her: and if this Advertiſement ſhould come to this young Lady's Knowledge, it is to be hoped that her uſual Senſe of Duty and Affection to her Parents, and the Certainty of her own Diſtreſs, by abſenting herſelf, will make her break through any Threats or Allurements, by which ſhe may be at preſent influenced.

Hoſpital for the Maintenance and Education of

Figure 9: *Public Ledger or the Daily Register of Commerce and Intelligence,* 17 April 1761, 3.[30]

[29] Gale Document Number: Z2001237070 © Copyright Cengage Learning.
[30] Gale Document Number: Z2001237070 © Copyright Cengage Learning.

The fate of this young woman is unknown. These reports oscillate between the possibility that the young woman consented to elope or was abducted by force and are inconclusive as befitting a news report. The story that we do have points to the public's suspicion about the nature of abduction. Such newspaper pieces fuel this suspicion. The social perception of 'abduction' as an equivocal term had been tested some eight years earlier by the sensational trial of Elizabeth Canning in 1753. It was tested again in 1798 by the abduction claim of Ann Brookhouse and it is to these cases that I now turn.

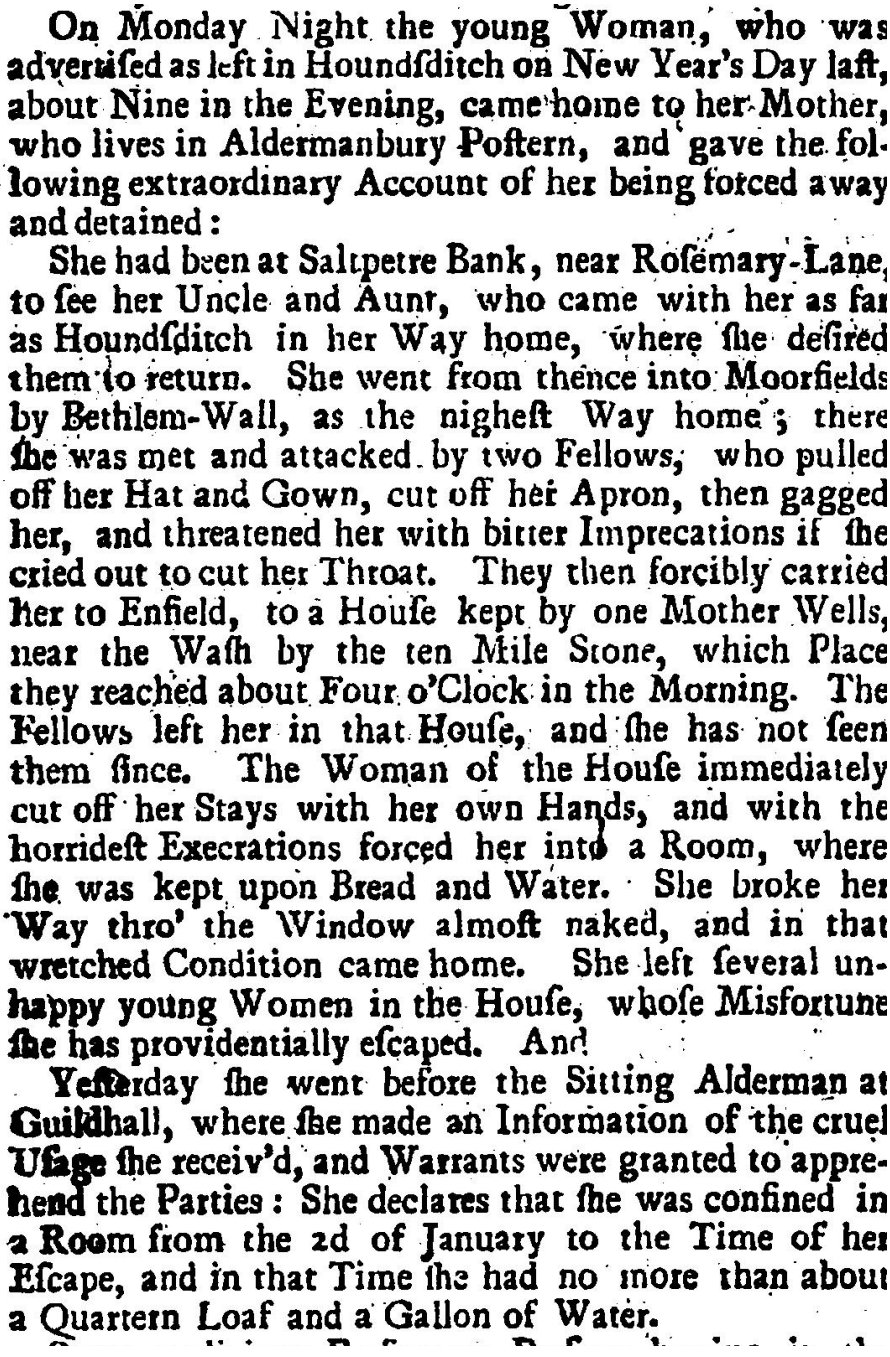
Elizabeth Canning (1753) and Ann Brookhouse (1798)

We have seen that 'abduction' is an equivocal term in journalistic discourse and received opinion generally reflected that suspicion. In this section, I discuss the case histories of Elizabeth Canning and Ann Brookhouse to illustrate the public's unease about abduction claims.[31] Both women claim abduction and both are subsequently suspected of using abduction as a means to disguise their true reason for absenting themselves for a few months. This suspicion can be traced through the news reports of their disappearance. These cases take place some forty-five years apart and demonstrate that the narrative of suspicion about 'abduction' was consistent over the course of the century.

Elizabeth Canning claimed to have been abducted and imprisoned by people intent on selling her into prostitution.[32] The *London Evening Post*, amongst other

[31] I have chosen these particular cases because the dates correspond to novels by Samuel Richardson (*The History of Sir Charles Grandison*) and Charlotte Smith (*The Young Philosopher*) respectively in which the abduction plot is pivotal to the story.
[32] All newspaper references to the Elizabeth Canning case can be found at Appendix A, Table 2, no. 6.

newspapers, carried her story (figure 10). The *Monthly Review* recorded numerous pamphlets about the case (including one authored by Henry Fielding) both for and



On Monday Night the young Woman, who was advertiſed as left in Houndſditch on New Year's Day laſt, about Nine in the Evening, came home to her Mother, who lives in Aldermanbury Poſtern, and gave the following extraordinary Account of her being forced away and detained:

She had been at Saltpetre Bank, near Roſemary-Lane, to ſee her Uncle and Aunt, who came with her as far as Houndſditch in her Way home, where ſhe deſired them to return. She went from thence into Moorfields by Bethlem-Wall, as the nigheſt Way home; there ſhe was met and attacked by two Fellows, who pulled off her Hat and Gown, cut off her Apron, then gagged her, and threatened her with bitter Imprecations if ſhe cried out to cut her Throat. They then forcibly carried her to Enfield, to a Houſe kept by one Mother Wells, near the Waſh by the ten Mile Stone, which Place they reached about Four o'Clock in the Morning. The Fellows left her in that Houſe, and ſhe has not ſeen them ſince. The Woman of the Houſe immediately cut off her Stays with her own Hands, and with the horrideſt Execrations forced her into a Room, where ſhe was kept upon Bread and Water. She broke her Way thro' the Window almoſt naked, and in that wretched Condition came home. She left ſeveral unhappy young Women in the Houſe, whoſe Misfortune ſhe has providentially eſcaped. And

Yeſterday ſhe went before the Sitting Alderman at Guildhall, where ſhe made an Information of the cruel Uſage ſhe receiv'd, and Warrants were granted to apprehend the Parties: She declares that ſhe was confined in a Room from the 2d of January to the Time of her Eſcape, and in that Time ſhe had no more than about a Quartern Loaf and a Gallon of Water.

Figure 10: *London Evening Post,* 30 January – 1 February 1753, London', 4.[33]

[33] Gale Document Number: Z2000656192 © Copyright Cengage Learning.

against Canning's version of events.[34] The *London Evening Post* described her abduction as an 'extraordinary Account' in which Canning was 'forced away and detained' by two men who threatened her life. She was 'forcibly carried' to a house from which she eventually escaped by climbing through a window. The newspaper reports that 'She left several unhappy young Women in the House, whose Misfortune she has providentially escaped.' Evidently, Canning's fate was to have been sold into prostitution.[35]

Henry Fielding believed Canning to be the innocent victim of a terrible crime.[36] But not everyone was convinced and her story was eventually disproved. She was convicted of perjury and transported to America. If she had not been abducted and held against her will, where had she been and what had she been doing during the time that she was missing? Contemporary commentators suggested that she spent the month with her lover or that she disappeared to abort an unwanted pregnancy.[37] Canning's claim of abduction, therefore, wears a very different aspect when considered in the light of an unwanted pregnancy and the desperate need to conceal it from friends, family, and her employers. The public interest that this case

[34] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, March 1753, summarises the arguments made by Fielding and Hill: 'A Summary of the Case of ELIZABETH CANNING …, *The Gentleman's Magazine: And Historical Chronicle, Jan.1736-Dec.1833*, 23 (March, 1753), 107-111.
[35] For a more recent discussion of the case, see John Treherne, *The Canning Enigma* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1989).
[36] Henry Fielding planned an abduction of his own in which he attempted to abduct his 15-year-old cousin. See Martin C. Battestin, 'Fielding, Henry (1707–1754)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/9400> [accessed 17 March 2017].
[37] See E. Biddulph, *Some account of the case between Elizabeth Canning, and Mary Squires …* in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (London: MDCCLIV (1754)). *The Monthly Review* recommended the pamphlet, 'Book Review, *Monthly Review, Or, Literary Journal, 1752*-1805, 10 (May, 1754), 393-394 (394). Treherne came to a similar conclusion.

generated demonstrates the suspicion in the public's consciousness that 'abduction' was a euphemistic and ambiguous term.

A similar abduction claim was made by Ann Brookhouse between June and September 1798 some forty-five years after the Canning case. The *Morning Herald* carried an advertisement about her disappearance: 'it is certain she was taken by force, or trepanned, on her way home'.[38] The report claimed that Brookhouse wrote to her parents to say that she was 'confined' but 'not permitted to say by whom, or where'. She eventually returned home four months later claiming to have been 'seized by two men' who 'threatened to take her life if she cried out' and that she had been held prisoner so that 'the Gentleman of the House' could marry her but was released when he became 'too ill to marry'.[39] Unlike Canning, Brookhouse did not identify her abductors nor the location of her captivity. Twelve days later the *Morning Herald* retracted its story. Its tone is that of spite, gossip and innuendo:

> The story of the *blindfolded* young Lady, who was carried away from *Coventry street,* and afterwards *interred* for a *few months,* for the amusement of her *whimsical cham ralo,* owed its miraculous creation to the SUN, in one of its *lunary contests,* from which it has of late been more liable than ever to be *eclipsed!*[40]

Why would Brookhouse fabricate her abduction? Was she also concealing an unwanted pregnancy? Her version of events was contradicted by a pamphlet published nine years later and authored by her 'duped friend, Ann Pile', who claimed that Brookhouse's story was invention.[41]

---

[38] Appendix A, Table 2, no. 39 (15 June 1798).
[39] Appendix A, Table 2, no. 39 (6 September 1798).
[40] *Morning Herald*, 18 September 1798, 'News', 2.
[41] See note to Ann Brookhouses's narrative, *A narrative of the seizure & confinement of Ann Brookhouse …*, in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (London: printed for the author, and sold by

'Elopement' as a euphemism for 'abduction'

I have been arguing that the newspaper narrative of 'abduction' disguises criminal behaviour as sexual intrigue and nurtured public unease about the true reason behind a sudden disappearance. The years that separate the Canning and Brookhouse cases show that suspicion about the legitimacy of claims of abduction were consistent over the century.

In this section, I focus on a further nuance associated with 'abduction'. Newspapers often blurred the distinction between 'elopement' and 'abduction', between consent and force. To 'elope' (which I have previously noted was defined by Johnson as acting in defiance of lawful authority: 'to run away; to break loose; to escape from law or restraint') is used to describe situations ranging from those where consent had been given or implied to those where consent had been denied or not sought. Although newspapers rarely offer a narrative of forced marriage at Gretna Green, it cannot be assumed that every newspaper report about an eloping couple is a consensual act. Indeed, news reports use the term 'elopement' when the story clearly indicates coercion. I argue that the historical record as documented by newspapers suggests that 'elopement' may be a euphemism for the use of force. I focus on reports about Gretna Green as the most immediately recognisable link to elopement in the historical record.[42]

F. & C. Rivingtons, and J. Johnson, St. Paul's Church-Yard, 1798). *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* states that this pamphlet disputes Brookhouse's story: Ann Pile, *Female Art: or True or False*, published in London in 1807.

[42] O'Connell observes that Gretna Green had become the 'premier destination for eloping English couples' by the 1770s, *Marriage Acts*, 122.

Gretna Green's reputation in the eighteenth century was as a place of romantic adventure and as a disreputable destination where irregular marriage was available as a business transaction.[43] The majority of news reports that refer to Gretna Green in my research sample emphasise a financial motive for eloping and the immorality of the enterprise, particularly that of the female participant.[44] However, even consensual elopement was not without its consequences for wealthy women because marrying without securing a financial settlement could leave a widow vulnerable to indigence. This would suggest that elopement is less likely to be consensual than newspaper announcements imply. For example, the following notice contains all the features usually associated with romantic elopement: youth, love, and money, but it also makes explicit the risks young women took when eloping. This young woman's financial and personal submission is made clear by the emphasis on her husband as 'master of her person and fortune':

> *Birmingham, June 30.* A young gentleman from this neighbourhood, and of Worcester college, Oxford, having been happy enough to engage the affections of a young Oxfordshire heiress, of great mental and personal accomplishments, she has this last week eloped with him, and at Gretna Green made the happy youth master of her person and fortune.[45]

[43] O'Connell, 'Dislocating Literature'.
[44] See Appendix B. Clandestine marriage was also regularly performed in Edinburgh and Glasgow where the area around the Canongate bore similarities to the Fleet in London, O'Connell, *Marriage Acts*, 115-119. O'Connell also argues that the English regarded Scots marriage law as part of the 'cultural primitivism that marked Britain's unruly and socially unreconstructed Celtic fringe', *Marriage Acts*, 114. See also *The Scottish Antiquary, or, Northern Notes and Queries*, 8.29 (1893), 21-24, Edinburgh University Press, for a description of the management of eloping couples at Gretna Green to the advantage of the celebrants. See also Meliora C. Smith, "Claverhouse", *Irregular Border Marriages* (Edinburgh: Moray Press, 1934) for an interesting but non-academic discussion of clandestine marriage in Scotland.
[45] Appendix B, Table 1, no. 46 (1788).

In some announcements, the language strongly implies that consent was unlikely but stops short of an accusation of violence, as in the following piece about an 'elopement' to Scotland between a footman and his young charge. (The young woman in this advertisement is twelve years of age, only a year younger than the fictional Betsy Thoughtless.) The use of 'persuaded' suggests coercion and the final comment blames her parents for their daughter's flight:

> An elopement has taken place in the neighbourhood of Grosvenor-square, John, as he attended his young mistress last Monday in a morning promenade, having persuaded her to accompany him to Scotland to be there hammered into wedlock […]. The lady went off about one o'clock at noon, and her pursuers followed about seven in the afternoon. She is only twelve years of age, and the valet is above thirty! This is the consequence of trusting fashionable children to the care of fashionable footmen.[46]

This announcement uses the phrase 'went off', which implies consent, although most of the piece suggests force. Many announcements use the phrase 'carried off', which is more ambiguous. It may mean either consent or force as in the following report about a Captain and a farmer's daughter. This piece only 'supposes' that the couple have eloped to Gretna Green and, by doing so, implies that they might not be married thus damming the young woman's reputation even further:

> Capt. G_____, of a Regiment of Dragoons, some days since carried off the daughter of an affluent farmer in the neighbourhood of Bletchingly, in Surrey. The lady possesses an independent fortune, and is supposed to have gone to Gretna Green.—The parties were traced to London, but the clue was here broken.[47]

[46] Appendix B, Table 1, no. 66 (1791).
[47] Appendix B, Table 1, no. 151 (1809).

Such linguistic ambiguity is evident in many reports. Whilst some are simple announcements reporting an elopement with no context to the decision: 'Louisa Hornby, the youngest daughter of the Governor, has eloped with Mr Little, an Irish Gentleman, only nineteen. They pass through Barnet, on their way to Scotland.'[48] Not all were so perspicuous: 'The young lady who eloped from Stratford, with a *feather*-merchant, will probably take *wing* to Gretna Green.'[49] Some make a mercenary motive explicit, 'A *Filly of Fortune* has run off with a *Black Leg*, from Newmarket, for Gretna Green. It is probable her cash will be lost on the very same spot from whence she set off on so unprofitable a race.'[50] In the latter two reports, punning language is employed to convey society's scepticism of the motives behind a sudden flight to Gretna Green and to condemn the woman as the active participant in a sexual adventure. In other pieces, the victim is reduced to a metonymy, her physical presence replaced by her fortune, 'Another Elopement is said to have taken place near Greenwich.—An Irish fortune-hunter has been so successful as to persuade a *twenty thousand pounder* to be his travelling companion to Gretna Green.'[51] Another suggests either that the sexual adventure of elopement was too great an allurement to resist but it could also be read as a distressing account of a woman who has simply disappeared: 'Last week a Lady of fashion, in the neighbourhood of BERKELEY-SQUARE, disappeared, it is supposed on a matrimonial

[48] *Whitehall Evening Post (1770)*, 28-30 July 1789, 'London', 4.
[49] Appendix B, Table, 1 no. 28 (1785).
[50] Appendix B, Table 1, no. 128 (1800).
[51] Appendix B, Table 1, no. 57 (1790). In Charlotte Smith's *The Young Philosopher*, the reckless and predatory Alphonso Delmont uses the same language, 'Tell me, George, faith now, was it such a notion that made thee coy to the fifty thousand pounder? Was it thy morality', *The Young Philosopher* (1798), ed. by A. A. Markley, The Works of Charlotte Smith, vol 10 (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2006), 202.

trip to *Gretna-Green.* The lady some time before, when her sister died in childbed, vowed celibacy!'[52] These announcements satirize the assumption of romance that consensual elopement implies. They can also be read as discourses of violence, avarice, and emotional misery. The nature of these reports as scandal and gossip disguises the use of force to encourage rich young women to marry without negotiating financial settlements against widowhood.

However, not all news reports about Gretna Green are equivocal. There is no ambiguity in the following account. This young woman has been abducted. 'Trepanned' tells us that she had not freely consented to her matrimonial trip.[53] The young victim has been ensnared as a bet between two men who are only interested in her financial value. Readers are informed that her fortune is protected by the law but the piece is silent on the young woman's future. This abduction is clearly reported as a youthful prank. The victim is a commodity; she is the subject of a gambling bet and the physical representation of a fortune:

> On Saturday last a son of Esculapius *trepanned* a young lady of about eighteen years of age, from the house of her guardian, in a principal town in Berkshire, and immediately set out for Gretna Green. We are assured that this amorous youth has not only ten thousand pounds in view (of which the young lady will be possessed) but is absolutely interested in a very considerable bet, that a gentleman does not make a million of dots before he arrives in Scotland. We hope that young *Mercury's* fire will be abated when he returns, to find the fair fugitive is a *ward of Chancery*.[54]

I have been arguing that the vocabulary of newspaper pieces reporting sudden disappearances as consensual elopements disguises the possibility that these events

[52] Appendix B, Table1, no. 51 (1789).
[53] Johnson defined 'trepan' as 'to catch, to ensnare', 'a stratagem by which anyone is ensnared'.
[54] Appendix B, Table 1, no. 42 (1787).

could also be violent abductions. The majority of elopement announcements in my research sample do not state explicitly that a woman has been taken without her consent. To do so would implicate the perpetrators in the criminal act of 'stealing an heiress' for which, as we have seen, punishment could be severe.

Many newspapers locate Gretna Green as the place to appropriate a fortune and a place where the distinction between consent and force could be ignored. We can also see in these reports that the newspaper narrative of elopement is prejudicial to a woman's reputation. Women who participate in an elopement are often condemned as immoral whilst her partner is generally only involved in a sexual intrigue with no negative consequences to his reputation. The association of elopement with sexual intrigue suggests that news reports about clandestine marriage at Gretna Green generate a taxonomy of female sexual behaviour outwith marriage. Newspapers rarely assign male aggression directly to elopement and this suggests that the press actively obscured abduction as a criminal act.

'Abduction', therefore, is a problematic term in the eighteenth-century lexicon. Its legal definition and the social perception of suspicion interact to create competing discourses that make it difficult to define the boundaries between abduction as a crime and as a disguise for behaviour that contravenes normal social codes of behaviour. The case against Richard Perry for the abduction of Clementina Clerke illustrates the difficulty contemporary society had in understanding what it meant to be abducted.

A National Scandal: the abduction of Clementina Clerke (1791-1794)

In 1791, a 'national scandal' erupted when Clementina Clerke, an heiress in her minority, left her boarding school with the local surgeon, Richard Perry, and married him at Gretna Green.[55] Perry is subsequently prosecuted for abduction but, in a sensational trial that attracted huge newspaper coverage, was acquitted when Clerke testified that she married him willingly.[56]

The newspaper narrative of this abduction intrigue questions the validity of the prosecution: did Richard Perry steal an heiress or did Clementina Clerke willingly take part in an adventure driven by passion? If the evidence supports both propositions, how can the justice system distinguish between consent and force? The case illustrates interlocking networks of social and cultural discourses within which consensual elopement becomes entangled with violent abduction.

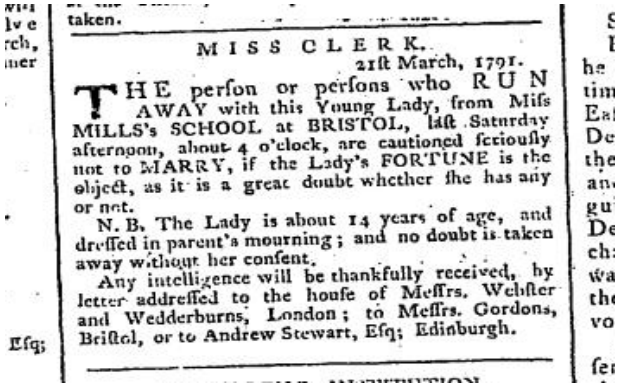
Clerke was a member of the eighteenth-century's newly enriched merchant class. Her fortune derived from Jamaica and her wealth was a prominent feature in newspaper accounts. Perry was the local surgeon and apothecary. The flight, pursuit, and trial took place under intense newspaper scrutiny and made the Perrys celebrities. By the time the trial took place (1794, three years after the alleged abduction) Clerke had borne a child and was pregnant again (with twin daughters). Arguments raged about whether she had been abducted or was a willing participant

[55] Anne Stott refers to the case as 'a national scandal' and to the trial as 'a nine-day wonder', *Wilberforce: Family and Friends* (Oxford University Press, 2012), 92; 97. See Appendix B, Table 2 for newspaper pieces relating to this case, unless stated otherwise in the text.

[56] An account of the trial was published anonymously: *The trial of Richard Vining Perry, Esq. for forcible abduction, or stealing an heiress, from the boarding-school of Miss Mills…*, in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* ([Bristol: [1794?]). *The Critical Review* condemns the romanticism of the elopement argument, 'The Trial of Richard Vining Perry, Esq…., *The Critical Review, Or, Annals of Literature*, 13 (April, 1795), 422-424.

in a premeditated elopement. Today, historian Ann Stott argues that the huge volume of public interest suggests that Clerke had little choice but to support her husband as her fame made her notorious and a guilty verdict would invalidate her marriage and make her children illegitimate.[57] A contemporary newspaper summed up Clerke's predicament. The prosecution, it claims, is 'founded somewhere in private pique, and secret combination' and Clerke is 'not an *heiress* but a *devise*'.[58] The trial can be followed through newspaper reports.

On 19 March 1791 Clerke left her boarding school and vanished. Her disappearance was front page news. An advertisement addressed to Perry was subsequently published warning him that Clerke's fortune was not settled and that if he had abducted her in anticipation of possessing her inheritance, then his action was premature. Perry was 'cautioned seriously not to MARRY if the Lady's FORTUNE is the object, as it is a great doubt whether she has any or not' (figure 11).



taken.

MISS CLERK.

21ſt March, 1791.

THE perſon or perſons who RUN AWAY with this Young Lady, from Miſs MILLS's SCHOOL at BRISTOL, laſt Saturday afternoon, about 4 o'clock, are cautioned ſeriouſly not to MARRY, if the Lady's FORTUNE is the object, as it is a great doubt whether ſhe has any or not.

N. B. The Lady is about 14 years of age, and dreſſed in parent's mourning; and no doubt is taken away without her conſent.

Any intelligence will be thankfully received, by letter addreſſed to the houſe of Meſſrs. Webſter and Wedderburns, London; to Meſſrs. Gordons, Briſtol, or to Andrew Stewart, Eſq; Edinburgh.

Figure 11 *Public Advertiser*, 22 March 1791, 'Classified Ads', 1[59]

[57] Stott, *Wilberforce: Family and Friends*, 92-97. Details of the case are also in Anne Stott, *Hannah More: The First Victorian* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 133–5 and 154–5.
[58] *Oracle and Public Advertiser*, 14 April 1794, 'Forcible Abduction, or Stealing an heiress', 3.
[59] Gale Document Number: Z2001216061. © Copyright Cengage Learning.

This advertisement specifically describes Clerke's disappearance as an abduction in its legal sense, 'no doubt is taken away without her consent' and the address given for information is not a coffeehouse but a solicitor's office, which marks the seriousness with which Clerke's family view her disappearance. Perry had committed a criminal act for which he could be capitally convicted.

According to newspaper reports, Perry's motivation is Clerke's immense fortune. But he is not alone in coveting it. One newspaper reports Clerke's guardian as intending to 'introduce a relation of his own as a husband […] lest she should think of looking higher she was not to be informed of the fortune being left to her'.[60] In this narrative, Clerke is regarded by her family as a prize commodity in the competitive marriage market and Perry is a fortune hunter. Clerke's mother recognised the invidious position of her heiress daughter: 'Miss CLERKE'S mother has very *prudently* declared, that she will have nothing to do with the prosecution of Mr. PERRY. She thinks it a matter of indifference, to which of the *two* Adventurers the young Lady should be sacrificed.'[61]

Clerke rebutted this accusation and exonerated her husband by admitting to complicity in their elopement. By doing so, she risked her own reputation:

> *TO THE PUBLIC*
> As it has been maliciously reported that I was taken away from MISS MILLS's School by my Husband by force, and without my consent, this is to inform the Public, and my Friends, that it is utterly false, and without the smallest foundation in truth; and whatever advertisements have, or may appear, stating any such thing, are destitute of truth; and I beg my Friends and the Public, not

[60] *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, 29 March 1791, 'Bristol, March 22', 3.
[61] *Morning Chronicle*, 30 April 1791, 'News', 3. The *General Evening Post*, 30 April-3 May 1791, 'The Bristol Elopement', 3, reports that Mrs Clerke aligned herself with her daughter and Mr Perry. A 'Mrs C' is mentioned as being in Ghent with the Perrys.

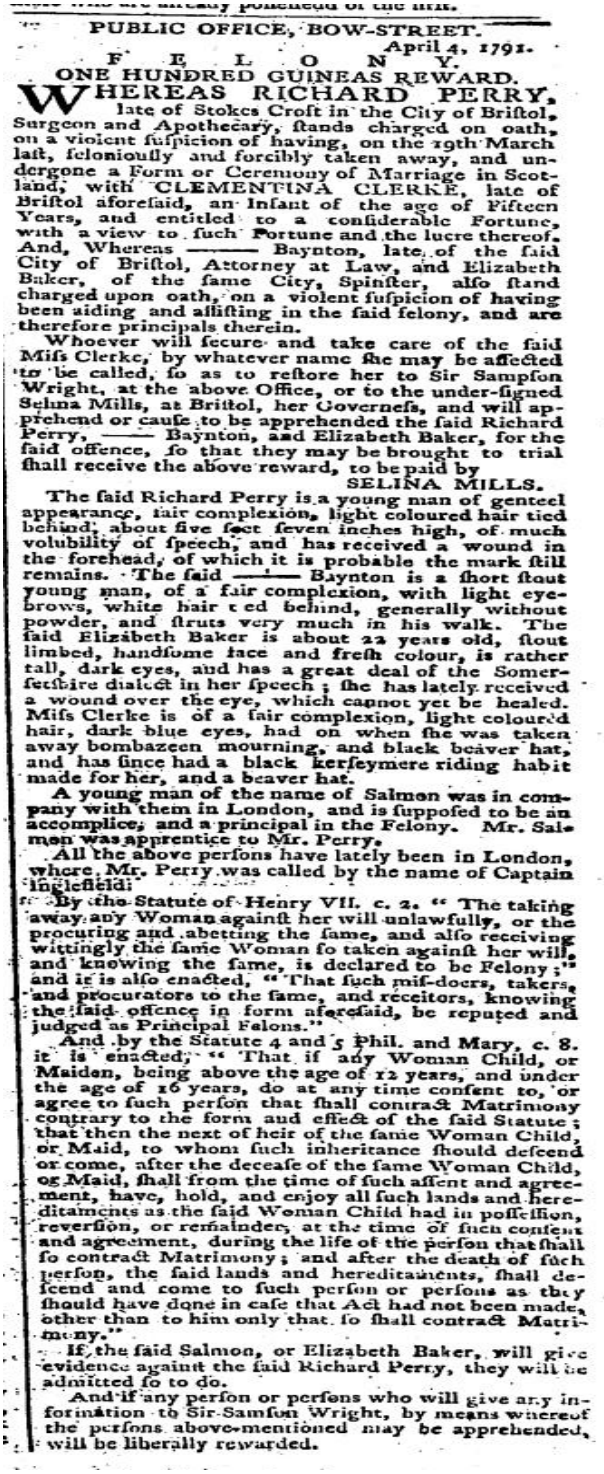
> to credit any such injurious report to the honour of my Husband, and the happiness of myself. CLEMENTINA PERRY.[62]

Her assertion is interpreted by at least one newspaper as proof of her immodesty: 'MISS CLERKE—the forward Miss of BRISTOL—has published a MANIFESTO in defence of her match, under the signature of CLEMENTINA PERRY—but from the diction, we cannot help thinking that in this instance PERRY had better been MUM!'[63]

Clerke's friends and family persisted in their belief that she had been abducted in the legal sense and that her fortune was the inducement. The head of the school offered a substantial reward for Perry's capture. The reward was widely advertised in at least nine newspapers and also 'stuck up in different parts of the City'. [64] Figure 12 is an example of these notices. It makes it clear that Perry abducted Clerke and it sets out in detail the statutes against stealing an heiress and those that refer to abducting a child. These statues also make clear that Clerke, and any children born of the union, would not lawfully inherit. Clerke's sudden disappearance, therefore, had serious consequences.

The formal notice of the intent to prosecute for abduction is published after Clerke has been missing for eighteen days. But beyond the legal context, the newspaper commentary is one of gleeful spite about Clerke and the greed of her relatives and of her husband. The young girl disappears beneath pejorative speculation and the weight of her fortune. At least one newspaper comments that Clerke's relatives did not seem to be interested in her personal safety: 'The Scotch

[62] *Morning Chronicle,* 28 March 1791, 'Classified Ads', 2.
[63] *Evening Mail,* 25-28 March 1791, 'Monday Morning', 3.
[64] *The World (1787)*, 1 April 1791, 'News', 3.



PUBLIC OFFICE, BOW-STREET.

April 4, 1791.

F E L O N Y.

ONE HUNDRED GUINEAS REWARD.

WHEREAS RICHARD PERRY, late of Stokes Croft in the City of Briſtol, Surgeon and Apothecary, ſtands charged on oath, on a violent ſuſpicion of having, on the 19th March laſt, feloniouſly and forcibly taken away, and undergone a Form or Ceremony of Marriage in Scotland, with CLEMENTINA CLERKE, late of Briſtol aforeſaid, an Infant of the age of Fifteen Years, and entitled to a conſiderable Fortune, with a view to ſuch Fortune and the lucre thereof. And, Whereas ——— Baynton, late of the ſaid City of Briſtol, Attorney at Law, and Elizabeth Baker, of the ſame City, Spinſter, alſo ſtand charged upon oath, on a violent ſuſpicion of having been aiding and aſſiſting in the ſaid felony, and are therefore principals therein.

Whoever will ſecure and take care of the ſaid Miſs Clerke, by whatever name ſhe may be affected to be called, ſo as to reſtore her to Sir Sampſon Wright, at the above Office, or to the under-ſigned Selina Mills, at Briſtol, her Governeſs, and will apprehend or cauſe to be apprehended the ſaid Richard Perry, ——— Baynton, and Elizabeth Baker, for the ſaid offence, ſo that they may be brought to trial ſhall receive the above reward, to be paid by

SELINA MILLS.

The ſaid Richard Perry is a young man of genteel appearance, fair complexion, light coloured hair tied behind, about five feet ſeven inches high, of much volubility of ſpeech, and has received a wound in the forehead, of which it is probable the mark ſtill remains. The ſaid ——— Baynton is a ſhort ſtout young man, of a fair complexion, with light eyebrows, white hair tied behind, generally without powder, and ſtruts very much in his walk. The ſaid Elizabeth Baker is about 22 years old, ſtout limbed, handſome face and freſh colour, is rather tall, dark eyes, and has a great deal of the Somerſetſhire dialect in her ſpeech; ſhe has lately received a wound over the eye, which cannot yet be healed. Miſs Clerke is of a fair complexion, light coloured hair, dark blue eyes, had on when ſhe was taken away bombazeen mourning, and black beaver hat, and has ſince had a black kerſeymere riding habit made for her, and a beaver hat.

A young man of the name of Salmon was in company with them in London, and is ſuppoſed to be an accomplice, and a principal in the Felony. Mr. Salmon was apprentice to Mr. Perry.

All the above perſons have lately been in London, where Mr. Perry was called by the name of Captain Inglefield.

By the Statute of Henry VII. c. 2. "The taking away any Woman againſt her will unlawfully, or the procuring and abetting the ſame, and alſo receiving wittingly the ſame Woman ſo taken againſt her will, and knowing the ſame, is declared to be Felony;" and it is alſo enacted, "That ſuch miſ-doers, takers, and procurators to the ſame, and receitors, knowing the ſaid offence in form aforeſaid, be reputed and judged as Principal Felons."

And by the Statute 4 and 5 Phil. and Mary, c. 8. it is enacted, "That if any Woman Child, or Maiden, being above the age of 12 years, and under the age of 16 years, do at any time conſent to, or agree to ſuch perſon that ſhall contract Matrimony contrary to the form and effect of the ſaid Statute; that then the next of heir of the ſame Woman Child, or Maid, to whom ſuch inheritance ſhould deſcend or come, after the deceaſe of the ſame Woman Child, or Maid, ſhall from the time of ſuch aſſent and agreement, have, hold, and enjoy all ſuch lands and hereditaments as the ſaid Woman Child had in poſſeſſion, reverſion, or remainder, at the time of ſuch conſent and agreement, during the life of the perſon that ſhall ſo contract Matrimony; and after the death of ſuch perſon, the ſaid lands and hereditaments, ſhall deſcend and come to ſuch perſon or perſons as they ſhould have done in caſe that Act had not been made, other than to him only that ſo ſhall contract Matrimony."

If the ſaid Salmon, or Elizabeth Baker, will give evidence againſt the ſaid Richard Perry, they will be admitted ſo to do.

And if any perſon or perſons who will give any information to Sir Samſon Wright, by means whereof the perſons above-mentioned may be apprehended, will be liberally rewarded.

Figure 12: *Public Advertiser,* 8 April 1791, 'Classified Ads', 4[65]

[65] Gale Document Number: Z2001216275 © Copyright Cengage Learning.

do not seem to like Miss CLERKE'S fortune going out of their hands. The young Lady appears to be considered the least part of the loss. They mean, however, according to report, to prosecute Mr. PERRY'.[66] Clerke's ignorance of her financial value is also claimed by the *General Evening Post*: 'she was ignorant of her being left this fortune, nor does she till this hour know of it'.[67] Presumably, she found out from the *Post*. A second article in the same newspaper and printed in other papers views the reward and the interest in her fortune as a bidding war: 'Sir SAMPSON WRIGHT bids 100 guineas for the *late* Miss CLERKE: Mr. PERRY has the lady at present in secret; at all events, the young bride will have JUSTICE some way or other.'[68] Clerke's mother increases the reward to two hundred guineas and this leads to a suggestion that the Perrys should claim the reward for themselves:

> The pursuers of Mr. Perry have been rather whimsical in their descriptions. They state the young Lady's fortune as very doubtful. They first told us she was fourteen years of age: now they have made her fifteen. They offered at first One Hundred Guineas now they offer Two Hundred. We suppose, if the increase in their terms, the *young couple* will themselves inform for the reward.[69]

The legal requirement that Clerke must be non-complicit for a successful prosecution is difficult to trace in the newspaper narrative other than in the advertisements paid for by Clerke's relatives and friends. The newspapers largely conform to three positions: that Clerke was abducted; that Clerke was active in the elopement, or that the elopement was a mutual decision. They cite evidence as well

[66] *The World (1787),* 1 April 1791, 'News', 3.
[67] *General Evening Post,* 22-24 March 1791, 'News', 4.
[68] *The World (1787),* 4 April 1791, 'News', 3.
[69] *Public Advertiser,* 15 April 1791, 'News', 3. I have not yet traced a formal notice increasing the reward to this level.

as gossip and innuendo to support these different positions. The difficulty the prosecution faced is that the evidence supported all these propositions.

Some newspapers recognise that the abduction theory had merit. At least one newspaper reports Clerke's disappearance as a case of abduction: 'The girl was certainly carried away without her consent, and it is a fact that she never saw her husband until after she left the boarding school.'[70] Another speculates that Perry carried out the most heinous of crimes and drugged and raped Clerke so that he could claim that the marriage had been consummated: 'Mr. PERRY is an Apothecary, and can administer to the *fair Runaway*, those potent and opiate drops, that will act as an antidote against all her afflictions in the midst of her persecutions!'[71] In this narrative, the legal principles of abduction are met in that Perry is described as drugging Clerke to secure her fortune but the context is one of salacious gossip.

Some newspaper commentary argued the opposite. It suggests that Perry was the victim of Clerke's manipulation: Clerke is the '*fatal instrument*' with whom he travels.[72] In this discourse, the language supports Clerke as the instigator of a sexual adventure within the ideology that blames women for the sexual transgressions of men. Clerke is the instigator of an elopement that is 'fatal' not to her reputation (on the grounds that she has already lost her good name by participating in a sexual adventure) but to Perry's reputation as a gentleman.

So, the argument that Perry abducted Clerke could be substantiated by circumstantial evidence such as that Clerke did not know Perry before she left her

[70] *The Times*, 8 April 1791, 'News', 3.
[71] *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, 8 April 1791, 'News', 2.
[72] *The World (1787)*, 13 April 1791, 'News', 3.

boarding school with him and factual evidence such as Perry's profession gave him access to the appropriate drugs to ensure Clerke's compliance and thereby secure her fortune. However, the argument that Clerke instigated the elopement is mainly speculation and innuendo and relies on a shared understanding of the euphemism of sudden disappearances rather than the legal context of the criminal act of abduction. Some newspapers suggest that the elopement was a joint enterprise: 'The 'Bristol Runaways' return from Gretna Green, 'where every thing had been transacted to the satisfaction of both persons!'[73]

There is no consistent line from the press about Clerke's complicity. Newspapers cite gossip and employ innuendo to suggest that Perry is either guilty or innocent and that Clerke is either innocent or immoral. The lack of firm evidence to confirm either position is also acknowledged: 'As soon as Mr. PERRY has completed his honeymoon, we would advise him to claim the 100l. by discovering himself. – What could they do with him if he were in their hands?'[74]

The newspaper commentary suggests that the conditions that Clerke must meet in order to be innocent of complicity are: to have been violently abducted against her will; to be ignorant of her status as an heiress, and to have been drugged so that she can claim to have been physically incapable of resisting sexual violation. This accurately reflects the legal requirements for a successful prosecution but there is little sympathy for Clerke's predicament. The newspapers set the agenda for the defence by pointing out how difficult abduction is to prove in a court of law. They

[73] *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 29 March 1791, 'News', 3.
[74] *Morning Chronicle*, 4 April 1791, 'News', 3.

show respect for the law but teach their readership that Clerke's case is a complex legal conundrum that is open to interpretation.

The newspaper debate focussed on whether Perry was duplicitous. By which I mean whether he was a fortune hunter or a respectable professional legitimately in love with his young wife. Clearly, the newspapers suggest that he could not be both. The press infers respect for the law by highlighting elements of the case that relate to forcible abduction but then undermine that narrative by reporting the story in the language of gossip and innuendo. They remind the public that abduction may well be a shield for scandalous behaviour. Perry's defence against the charge of abduction relates to this narrative of scandal: 'Mr. PERRY, before he ran away with Miss CLERKE, was a Surgeon and Apothecary in good business in Bristol, and much esteemed by the principal Gentlemen in the place:—he cannot therefore be called an *adventurer*.'[75]

The prosecution's failure to secure a conviction is reported by some newspapers as directly related to the evidence Clerke gave at her husband's trial: 'The Recorder was of opinion that this evidence of Mrs. Perry intitled the defendant to be acquitted'.[76] Clerke admitted complicity and therefore saved her husband from a capital conviction but other newspapers denied the importance of her evidence: '*independently of* Mrs. PERRY's *evidence, the whole that they had heard before, was*

[75] *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser,* 4 April 1791, 'News', 3.
[76] *Morning Chronicle,* 18 April 1794, 'Extract of a letter from Bristol', 4. The type of intrusive questioning a woman would be subjected to in a trial for abduction and forcible marriage is set out by Schwarz. She emphasises the 'dramatic interchanges among the prosecutrix, defendant, and judge' in a trial for abduction which 'suggest the unruly and abusive atmosphere' the victim would be required to undergo, 286. An abductee had cause to fear court proceedings.

so slight, that they could not hesitate a moment in finding the prisoner Not Guilty'.[77] This stance is interesting and suggests that the motivation for such reporting is ideological: a man should not be beholden to his wife. Newspapers describe Clerke's evidence in romantic terms so that her admission that she was willing to be involved in a sexual intrigue is obscured. Clerke is depicted as a beautiful and dutiful wife rather than a licentious young lady who acquiesced to passion. The newspapers paint an image of Clerke as the Roman goddess of the dawn, sweet and innocent, which draws the reader's attention away from the defence's argument that she was a willing participant in a sexual adventure:

> this charming lady rose, like Aurora with the morn, clad in cerulean blue, with all the sweetness of innocence, conjugal affection, and pleasing confidence. […] Mrs PERRY said she *voluntarily* left Miss MILLS […]. The plan of her elopement was settled between Mr. PERRY and *herself* […] and though he had conceived an affection for her, that she did not think it was for *lucre*.[78]

Clerke is made invisible by the legal argument about the destination of her fortune and she is obscured by a rhetorical strategy that replaces her physical presence with notions of innocence allied to beauty. Clerke survived her abduction/elopement but sacrificed her reputation to ensure that her marriage was valid and her children legitimate thus protecting their right to inherit. It is difficult to assume anything other than financial advantage as the motive for Perry's actions, for the prosecution, and for Clerke's admission of complicity. Clerke's predicament

[77] *Oracle and Public Advertiser*, 17 April 1794, 'Bristol Sessions of Gaol Deliver', 3.
[78] *Oracle and Public Advertiser*, 17 April 1794,'Bristol Sessions of Gaol Deliver', 3. Clerke's description as serene and dressed in blue has religious associations with the Madonna.

suggests that money made her vulnerable to abduction. She was burdened by her wealth rather than protected by it.

Abduction and female agency

I have been arguing that the historical record shows that women frequently disappear, that their reasons for doing so are many and varied, and that received opinion assumes scandal rather than violent criminal acts. Newspapers, of course, are historical documents and their purpose is to report news not to complete a story. Novels, however, are driven by narrative and writers choose the plot and bring it to a conclusion. In novels, the abduction plot is a narrative choice designed to achieve a specific purpose. The historical record supports the perception that 'abduction' is a euphemism for a sexual adventure and novels have the space to explore the motivation that underlies that perception. In this next section, I introduce my argument that fictional abduction plots parallel the complexity of abduction in the historical record but suggest that the abduction plot could signify female agency rather than female subjugation.

Historians note the influence of popular fiction on the public perception of abduction created by the Perry case: 'The story gripped public attention because it read like the plot of so many novels of the period.'[79] Perry was 'from the same reckless, unscrupulous mould as Samuel Richardson's Lovelace'.[80] Many scholars have discussed the relationship between the development of the newspaper and the

[79] Stott, *Wilberforce: Family and Friends*, 93.
[80] Ibid.

rise of the novel.[81] We are also familiar with the eighteenth-century belief that novels influenced behaviour. News reports, for example, provide an intertextual referent for the interpretation of fictional abduction narratives as representing true-life behaviour:

> The effects of Novel reading shews how much such books ought to be encouraged in Boarding Schools. A school girl affecting to faint in church, for the purpose of going off with jovial tar, in *clerical* attire, is doubtless an incident suggested in some modern Romance.[82]

The alternative possibility—that young women from boarding schools were forced into 'going off'—is much less visible.

The focus of this chapter has been on the social perception that abduction obscures unconventional behaviour. This unease about claims of abduction is fictionalised in novels. Charlotte Smith depicts the dilemma about whether to advertise a daughter as missing in *The Young Philosopher* (1798). Smith incorporates a scene in which a mother visits a newspaper office and agonises over placing an advertisement about her daughter whom she believes to have been abducted. She leaves without doing so as she fears it would damage her daughter's reputation. The disquiet that is fictionalised in this scene parallels the issues discussed in this chapter; fear of the perception that 'abduction' is a euphemism for behaviour that would ruin a young woman's reputation:

---

[81] Resources for the value of newspapers to eighteenth-century society and their relationship to novels include: Lennard J. Davis, *Factual Fictions: The Origins of the English Novel*, 2nd edn. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996); Jacqueline Pearson, *Women's Reading in Britain 1750-1835*; Jill Campbell, 'Domestic Intelligence: Newspaper Advertising and the Eighteenth-Century Novel', Doug Underwood, *Journalism and the Novel: Truth and Fiction 1700-2000*, and David Allan, *Commonplace Books and Reading in Georgian England*. On reading in the late eighteenth century, see William St. Clair, *The Reading Nation*. St. Clair excludes newspaper reading from his definition of the 'reading nation' but includes it in his definition of the 'literate nation', 13.
[82] *Star*, 6 January 1792, 'News', 3.

> The man in the office […] was totally void of feeling; he […] somewhat roughly, demanded to know her business; and with difficulty she explained to him, that she wished to put into the papers an advertisement relative to the disappearance of a young lady; but the moment she had said so much, the cruel necessity of describing her daughter, of making her loss public, and exposing her to the malicious animadversions of the brutal and vicious, struck so forcibly upon her mind, that when the man with an ironical sneer on his countenance asked her for the particulars, […]. Mrs Glenmorris found herself utterly incapable of executing her plan.[83]

Smith's abduction plot illustrates a woman's failure to tap into the public space represented by newspapers because she is constrained by the social convention that such exposure could lead to a loss of reputation and this outweighs the benefits that a newspaper appeal could offer.

Smith includes an incident in *Emmeline, the Orphan of the Castle* that fictionalises the newspaper narrative of gossip, rumour, and scandal in relation to abduction. A dandified rival for the titular heroine's affections accidently encounters her during her abduction ordeal. He challenges her abductor to a duel and then sends a letter to a newspaper fabricating the outcome but which does not mention the heroine's predicament:

> Determined, however, to lose no part of the glory which he thought he had dearly purchased by being frightened out of his wits, he wrote, in the form of a letter, a most tremendous account of the duel to the daily papers, in which he described all its imaginary horrors, and ended with asserting very roundly, that "Mr Elkerton had the misfortune dangerously to wound the Hon. Frederic Delamere and, when this account came away, there were no hopes of his recovery". (201)[84]

[83] Smith, *The Young Philosopher*, 267-268.

[84] Such incidents of self-promotion are not unusual in newspapers. Hyed observes that items for which the contributor paid for publication were incorporated into newspapers without comment. He states that such articles differ from 'hidden advertisements', which are usually penultimate paragraphs before classified advertisements, *Reading Newspapers*, 110-111 (110).

A satire on abduction: *Emmeline, the Orphan of the Castle* (1788)

Abduction plots in Smith's novels are not straightforward. Diane Long Hoeveler observed that Smith presents patriarchy in *Emmeline* 'not as a monolithic power' but 'as a contested space'.[85] Mary Scholfield agrees, Smith 'lets the men control, yet she undermines this very domination through Emmeline'.[86] Ledoux argues that Smith depicted 'both female victimization and empowerment' in *Emmeline*.[87] I agree with these views and argue that a central concern of the abduction episodes in this novel is to suggest female agency in transforming the pejorative narrative of abduction into one of virtuous action. I argue that the function of abduction in *Emmeline* is to challenge the convention of the subjugated woman by depicting women as rational beings capable of dealing with adversity without recourse to male authority.

Lisa O'Connell observes that in the late eighteenth-century atmosphere 'of excess and contagion […] female readers might mistake romantic representations for realities, where the boundaries between [the] world of fiction and the world of action become dangerously destabilized'.[88] Many eighteenth-century novels make abduction appear romantic. In numerous abduction plots, the heroine proves her worth as a prospective wife and mother by surviving the ultimate trial of being carried away by a villain out to steal her fortune or a libertine intent on stealing her virginity. Thus, some novels make abduction standard reading fare. However, true-

[85] Diane Long Hoeveler, *Gothic Feminism: The Professionalization of Gender from Charlotte Smith to the Brontës* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvanian State University Press, 1998), 47.
[86] Mary Anne Schofield, *Masking and Unmasking the Female Mind: Disguising Romances in Feminine Fiction, 1713-1799* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1990), 150.
[87] Ellen Malenas Ledoux, 'Defiant Damsels: Gothic Space and Female Agency in *Emmeline*, *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and *Secresy*', *Women's Writing*, 18.3 (2011) 331-347 (334).
[88] O'Connell, *Marriage Acts*, 207.

life case histories, such as those of Canning and Brookhouse depict abduction as dangerous to a woman's reputation unless she can substantiate the evil intentions of her abductor. This is an uncomfortable situation. Fictional abduction plots and scenes present abduction as a rite of passage, a familiar hazard that normalises a situation that is inherently violent and dangerous. However, they also draw on true-life examples that narrate the patriarchal view of the immorality of women who allow themselves to be taken. *Emmeline* includes many scenes of elopement, abduction, and sudden disappearance. These scenes disrupt the narrative of romance to demonstrate that a woman's sudden disappearance rarely has a simple explanation.

In a previous chapter, I pointed out the correlation between the arguments made during the parliamentary debate on the 1753 Marriage Act and abduction plots and scenes in novels that illustrate the relationship between the historical record of abduction and fictional abduction narratives. For example, there are scenes in *Emmeline* that reflect Sir Roger Nugent's argument that if the Bill 'passes into a law, no commoner will ever marry a rich heiress, unless his father be a minister of state, nor will a peer's eldest son marry the daughter of a commoner, unless she be a rich heiress'.[89] Lady Frances's miserable marriage to a social climber employed by her father (a powerful minister of state) and her abduction by her husband is a fictional example similar to the first situation. Delamere's abduction of the titular heroine in

[89] *London Magazine* (August, 1753), 363. David Lemmings observes that the parliamentarians pointing out the vulnerability of women to those who would defraud them of their wealth and reputation were not necessarily innocent of such practices themselves. He states that Sir Roger Nugent was notorious for marrying rich widows and the Hon. Charles Townshend saw marriage only as a means to better himself. Lemmings states that far from being upholders of the benefits of marrying for love and affection, 'they were actually fortune-hunters, who wanted only to keep the marriage market open for fellow spirits', 'Marriage and the Law in the Eighteenth Century', 356.

the face of the implacable opposition of his father is an example of the second. However, I argue that Smith deployed the abduction motif in more complex ways than merely as a reflection of true-life events.

Emmeline is the story of a young woman defrauded of her inheritance by her uncle and then kept in ignorance of her true identity. The uncle's deception is threatened when his son, Delamere, develops a passionate desire for Emmeline and makes various attempts to ensnare her into a sham or a clandestine marriage. Emmeline is initially attracted to Delamere but she rejects him when his tendency to emotional outbursts and the violence of his temper become clear. Emmeline eventually regains her birthright with the help of Godolphin, whose character attributes oppose Delamere and whom she marries at the end of the novel.

Over the course of the novel, the titular heroine is embroiled in various situations in which she disappears without explanation. Some situations are familiar abduction scenes. For example, Delamere abducts Emmeline and attempts to carry her to Scotland but is thwarted when she falls ill and she is helped to escape by the local doctor. In other scenes, Emmeline is thought to have been abducted but has, in fact, deliberately engineered her own disappearance either to avoid Delamere's nefarious attempts on her virginity or to avoid society's condemnation when she helps a friend conceal her pregnancy. Thus 'abduction' in *Emmeline* is not a stable concept. It links into the network of legal and social discourses that define 'abduction' as both a crime and a convenient excuse for acting contrary to culturally imposed behaviour norms. Indeed, there are so many scenes of abduction, threatened abduction, abduction disguised as elopement, and sudden disappearances in

Emmeline that the novel is almost a satire on a woman's susceptibility to being taken and imprisoned. Jodi Leigh Wyett argues that *Emmeline* is a parody that 'employs most every popular novel convention of the late eighteenth century'.[90] I agree and argue that abduction is explored in *Emmeline* as an unlikely predicament for able and sensible women thinking and acting for themselves. The multiple abduction scenes have specific functions in the story but their overall effect unsettles the view of society as a properly functioning system of benevolent patriarchy by which the law protects women to the benefit of society as a whole.

The abduction scenes centre on the titular heroine. She is the victim of the most detailed abduction plot planned by the hot-headed principal male character, Delamere. This episode has been compared to Lovelace's abduction of Clarissa (I discuss *Clarissa* in the next chapter). Loraine Fletcher points out that it is a re-working of that plot without the tragic ending. Instead: 'Delamere 'is forced, anti-climatically, to return Emmeline to her friends.'[91] The heroine is also threatened with abduction by *lettre de cachet*; thought vulnerable to being carried off by a dandified suitor; believed to have eloped twice with the same man, and vanishes mysteriously because she is assisting an aristocratic young woman to drop out of society so that she can give birth to her illegitimate child. In addition, Lady Frances is abducted by *lettre de cachet* and incarcerated indefinitely in a convent. These diverse abduction scenes offer conventional depictions of passive resistance to male aggression and

[90] Jodi Leigh Wyett, *Reading Women: Female Novelists, Female Readers, 1751-1818*, Thesis Order No. 9933028 (Wayne State University, 1999), 209. Wyett points out that all the female characters in *Emmeline* read, although she concentrates on novels rather than newspapers.
[91] Fletcher, Introduction, 17.

punishment for behaviour deemed unacceptable within the context of a patriarchal society. They can also be read as offering an alternative interpretation; that of female agency and women's desire to be regarded as able and capable rather than driven by emotion.

Spacks observes that, 'Immersion in eighteenth-century discourse must tempt the reader to think in terms of polarities.'[92] We can see this polarisation in Smith's use of contrasting characters. Hilibush pointed out in her dissertation in 1941 that Smith 'develops her characters, in part, by drawing contrasts' and gives the virtuous Emmeline and Lady Adelina, who is seduced and gives birth to an illegitimate child, as an example.[93] Lady Frances and Emmeline are also in opposition. They represent respectively the immoral influence of newspapers and the moral influence of improving literature. Indeed, the scene that introduces Lady Frances to the reader depicts her reading a newspaper (156).[94]

Lady Frances's narrative of scandalous behaviour, clandestine marriage, and incarceration in a convent opposes Emmeline's narrative of personal integrity and fulfilment of a woman's role through domestic felicity. Lady Frances's character attributes emerge through her choice of newspapers as reading matter, her clandestine and loveless marriage, and her scandalous sexual behaviour. Emmeline, by contrast, has access to a library of ancient but morally improving literature and

[92] Spacks, *Desire and Truth*, 235.
[93] Florence May Anna Hilbish, *Charlotte Smith, Poet and Novelist (1749-1806): A dissertation* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1941), 367.
[94] Smith makes use of this analogy again in *The Young Philosopher* when the gossip, Mrs Crewkherne, describes newspapers as 'a bad thing', I:40. Frances Burney also makes use of this distinction by allocating newspapers as the preferred reading matter of the arrogant and ignorant Clermont in *Camilla*.

her attributes emerge through steadfastness and resolute behaviour in adversity. Lady Frances's reading material suggests involvement in a modern but immoral society while Emmeline chooses books to place on the shelf in her room in an act of 'canon-formation' which Deirdre Lynch argues 'prefigures the manner in which Smith […] will align questions of pedigree, the disposition of property, and nationality'. [95] Emmeline's decision to begin her own library is an element of Smith's narrative strategy to draw attention to the significance of social status, inheritance, and nationality. Both Frances and Emmeline suffer abduction but it is the morally corrupt Frances who is permanently damaged. Emmeline survives her abduction and is rewarded with the recovery of her fortune, a glorious marriage, and a happy future.

Delamere's plot to abduct Emmeline is vague and impulsive as befitting his character attributes which are directly related to his mother 'who had never any command over her passions' (118). The emotional instability of this aristocratic family is not confined to the female gender.[96] The abduction attempt is preceded by other emotionally charged attempts to coerce Emmeline into marriage. Delamere displays irrational behaviour in contrast to Emmeline's thoughtful actions. He pleads for a 'Scottish expedition' (77), a 'private marriage' (125), and 'an elopement' (142). He finally abducts her 'in despair' (172) but makes no practical arrangements for the journey. This abduction is described as an 'involuntary elopement' (193), which is a new phrase in the lexicon of abduction. It makes clear that Emmeline is not complicit

[95] Deirdre Lynch 'Gothic libraries and national subjects', *Studies in Romanticism*, 40.1 (Spring 2001), 29-48 (36).
[96] Wyett points out that it is Delamere who is hampered by his emotions rather than Emmeline, 'What Delamere does not learn is that violent passions are the actual problem, his problem', 215.

even though the plot includes the twist that the heroine is initially attracted to this most unstable character. Delamere portrays the emotional instability normally associated in the historical record with female victims of abduction whilst Emmeline retains her ability to think clearly.

Emmeline is the innocent beauty pursued by men. However, her characterisation is not that of a passive and submissive young woman who escapes abduction by chance or fortuitous circumstances. Nor is she characterised as frivolous and romantic and as perceiving abduction as an exciting adventure. Rather, she manipulates her situation by negotiating deals with her violent and unstable aristocratic suitor and his arrogant father and refuses to be cowed by the aggressive Lady Montreville, to whom she considers herself 'superior' (157).

Other female characters represent the conventional emotionally driven young women who view abduction/elopement to Gretna Green as an exciting adventure offering a glittering future. The absurdity of this expectation is foregrounded by the characters depicting it. The foolish Mrs Crofts' daughters, for example, attend a masquerade with the express desire of being abducted. Dressed extravagantly and exhibiting 'excessive affectation' (460), they scan the room for likely candidates for an abduction adventure:

> the girls were not without hopes, that among them there might be some of that species of men of quality, whom modern novelists describe as being in the habit of carrying forcibly away, beautiful young creatures, with whom perchance they become enamoured, and marrying them in despite of all opposition. (460)

Smith's phrase 'carrying forcibly away' emphasises the violence inherent in this fantasy and demonstrates the danger in conflating consensual elopement with

abduction. The consequences of violent abduction are dismissed as romantic delusion: 'They longed above all things to meet with such adventures, and to be carried off by a Lord or a Baronet at least' (460). There is no distinction here between elopement – running away with a lover with the ultimate aim of marriage (which is the clear expectation of these girls) – and abduction, which is likely to be the intent of the 'men of quality' that 'modern novelists' depict.

There are also scenes in this novel of sudden disappearances such as Emmeline's early morning departure from Mowbray Castle to escape Delamere's attentions. This is interpreted as a sexual intrigue, Delamere 'took it for granted that Fitz-Edward had carried her off' (106). Similarly, when Emmeline disappears with Lady Adelina to assist in the birth of her illegitimate child, her absence is again assumed to be the result of a sexual intrigue. Indeed, as I have already noted, Smith endorses the ambiguity of sudden disappearances by describing Emmeline as having 'no notion of the variety of motives' (261) such sudden absences imply.

In Smith's scenes of seemingly inexplicable disappearances, women act rationally to protect themselves and their reputations from the rapacious sexual appetites of aristocratic men. The heroine's abduction scenes disrupt the narrative of complicity and the euphemism of sexual intrigue as a result of weak intellect and emotional instability.

Lady Frances's abduction scenes are of a much darker hue. Here abduction is punishment for transgressive behaviour. Fletcher points out that Lady Frances's abduction and incarceration in a convent in France is 'endorsed by the narrator and

contributes to the happy ending' (19). It is instigated by the virtuous Lord Westhaven: 'Crofts […] influenced by his authority, and still more by his own desire to lessen her expences […] found no great difficulty in procuring a *lettre de cachet*, which confined her during pleasure to a convent' (474). Fletcher contrasts this abduction by *lettre de cachet* with Lady Montreville's suggestion that Emmeline be disposed of in the same way: 'it would not be difficult to put an end to the trouble she had dared to give us' (152). Fletcher argues that this depicts Lady Montreville's unjust behaviour in contrast to Lady Frances's abduction, which is presented as the just application of benign patriarchy. Both acts are predicated on a perceived need to protect family honour but only the woman's suggestion is deemed to be the result of jealousy and insecurity. So, abduction would be justifiable if it was carried out by the morally-upright patriarch defending his family's reputation but unjustifiable when proposed by a woman, even when she is also motivated by the same desire to protect her family.

Many of the abduction scenes in *Emmeline* foreground money and passion. However, there is an underlying subtext to these scenes that focuses on the anxiety that the victim might have been a conspirator in a sexual intrigue. Abducted heroines fear for their reputations because even the suspicion of an unexplained disappearance is sufficient to ruin a reputation. We have seen that the historical record contributes to such fears because we have seen that newspapers regularly report 'abduction' in terms of gossip and scandal. Novels like *Emmeline* where sudden disappearances are given rational explanations and where women think and act for themselves rather than defer to male authority question such received opinion.

Part Two: Abduction in Fiction

Chapter Three: Abduction: 'The Vilest of Plots': the importance of reviews

We have seen that 'abduction' is an equivocal term. It has a legal context as a capital offence and has meaning in a social and cultural context as a euphemism for female sexual behaviour outside marriage. This makes the criminal act of 'abduction' difficult to perceive. I have read the abduction plots and scenes in Charlotte Smith's *Emmeline, the Orphan of the Castle* as challenging this narrative of suspicion.

I have been arguing that the meaning and vocabulary of 'abduction' in newspapers is equivocal, ambiguous, and imprecise. In part two of my thesis, I argue that fictional abduction plots parallel this ambiguity. I consider literary reviews and suggest that reviewing both exposes the structure of the abduction plot and compresses it to iron out nuances.

In this chapter, I argue that 'abduction' is a term laden with nuances and constructed by context. It is a commonplace to observe that the abduction plot is associated with violence. I suggest that it can also be associated with female agency where the female victim of violence displays resilience in the face of adversity and often engineers her own escape. In many journals, a single issue may contain multiple reviews in which the heroine is described as being subject to violence or where the novel is described as containing scenes that may adversely affect the morality of a female reader. Sometimes, such as in the example given in figure 14 below, these reviews are short comments on a number of different novels carried on a single page. Reviews may be read as presenting the reader with a discourse of

aggression that normalises violence against women.[1] I suggest that the vocabulary of such reviews offers an interpretation of the abduction plot that supresses female agency.

I also suggest that reviews sometimes offer a different interpretation of a heroine's ordeal than that portrayed in the novel. I argue that some reviews carry different judgements about the degree of the heroine's complicity in, or culpability for, her predicament. By which I mean, that the language used to critique abduction narratives implies judgements about a heroine's complicity in being carried off that could be different in degree from that narrated in the novel. Furthermore, I suggest that 'abduction' in fiction is linked to contexts such as deception, theft, and financial greed and that the compression of plots in reviews emphasises the relationship between the abduction motif and these contexts in a more direct way than the novels themselves. I explore these issues in novels that are not widely read today. Finally, I consider Albrecht von Haller's review of Richardson's *Clarissa or the History of a Young Lady* (1747-48), which focusses on contemporary concerns about an exemplary heroine's culpability for her abduction.

Literary reviews: a discourse of aggression

St. Clair observes that reviews are 'poor' indicators of reader reception because they were often issued many weeks after the novel had been published.[2] He also argues that reviews are 'valuable sources for reconstructing the historical horizons of

[1] Violence towards women was not articulated as a concept in the eighteenth century but its existence as lived experience was recognised. Carolyn Woodward makes this point. She discusses the way in which social issues, such as violence towards women, were present in eighteenth-century society but not recognised as distinct 'cultural categories', 'Naming Names in Mid-eighteenth-century Feminist Theory', *Women's Writing*, 1.3 (1994), 291-316 (291).
[2] St. Clair, 189.

expectations against which newly printed texts were perceived'.[3] That is to say, reviews allow us to place texts in their historical context and to examine in detail the contemporary reception of a specific work.

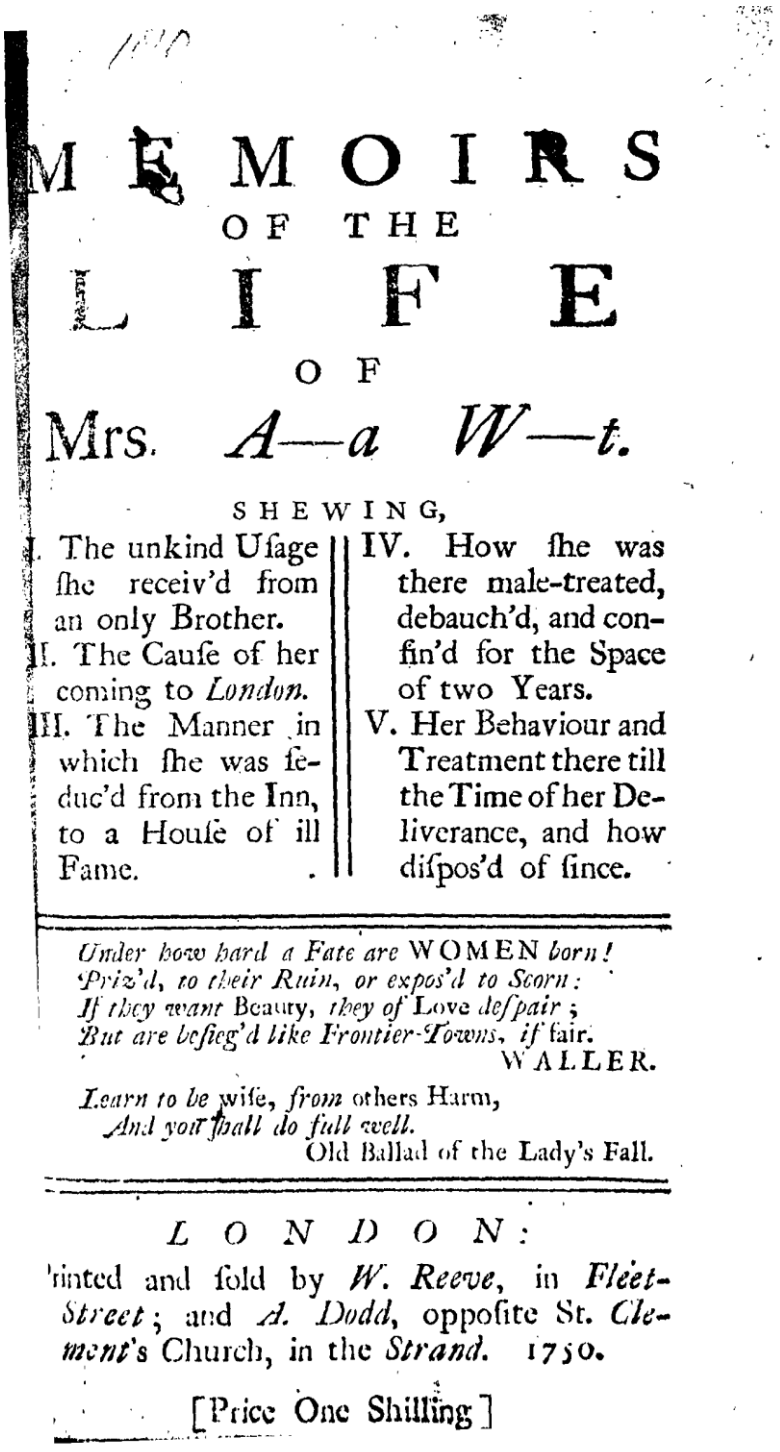
The eighteenth-century emphasis on comprehensive reviewing brought texts that critics considered to be of no literary merit to the attention of the reading public.[4] Thus works of sexual aggression received notice that they might not otherwise have attracted. For example, the *Monthly Review* commented on a pamphlet entitled *Memoirs of the Life of Mrs.* A___a W___ t, *shewing the unkind Usage she received from an only Brother. The Cause of her coming to* London. *The Manner in which she was seduced from the Inn to a House of Ill Fame. How she was there debauched, and confined two Years; and how dispos'd of since* (figure 13). Beneath the title are quotes on the theme of a woman's culpability for her sexual violation such as: '*Priz'd, to their Ruin*'. The *Monthly Review* condemned the pamphlet as 'wretchedly told' and 'full of idle puerilities'.[5] Nevertheless, its narrative of casual violence and sexual exploitation is given prominence by its inclusion in a journal commenting on literary works.

---

[3] Ibid, 285.

[4] Doody points out that by 1739 the *Gentleman's Magazine* was publishing book reviews and they took up an increasing amount of space in the magazine, *True Story of the Novel*, 276. The *Monthly Review* undertook comprehensive reviewing on its establishment in 1749 and other journals followed. The practice continued until the establishment of the *Edinburgh Review* in 1803, which reviewed selectively. Information on the history of reviewing and the publishing industry can be found in Tompkins, 8-18; Derek Roper, *Reviewing before the 'Edinburgh' 1788-1802* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1978); Antonia Forster, *Index to Book Reviews in England 1749 to 1774* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1990) and her essay; 'Review Journals and the Reading Public', in *Books and their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England: New Essays*, ed. by Isabel Rivers (London: Leicester University Press, 2001), 171-190; St. Clair, *The Reading Nation*, and David Allan, *Making British Culture: English Readers and the Scottish Enlightenment 1740-1830*. Reviewing's relationship to the practice of commonplacing is discussed by David Allan in *Commonplace Books and Reading in Georgian England*.

[5] G., 'Book Review', *The Monthly Review, 1749-1750*, 2 (December, 1749), 114-115 (115).



MEMOIRS
OF THE
LIFE
OF
Mrs. *A—a W—t.*

SHEWING,

I. The unkind Uſage ſhe receiv'd from an only Brother.
II. The Cauſe of her coming to *London.*
III. The Manner in which ſhe was ſeduc'd from the Inn, to a Houſe of ill Fame.
IV. How ſhe was there male-treated, debauch'd, and confin'd for the Space of two Years.
V. Her Behaviour and Treatment there till the Time of her Deliverance, and how diſpos'd of ſince.

Under how hard a Fate are WOMEN *born!*
Priz'd, to their Ruin, or expos'd to Scorn:
If they want Beauty, *they of* Love *deſpair;*
But are beſieg'd like Frontier-Towns, if fair.
WALLER.

Learn to be wiſe, *from* others Harm,
And you ſhall do full well.
Old Ballad of the Lady's Fall.

LONDON:
Printed and ſold by *W. Reeve*, in *Fleet-Street*; and *A. Dodd*, oppoſite St. *Clement*'s Church, in the *Strand*. 1750.

[Price One Shilling]

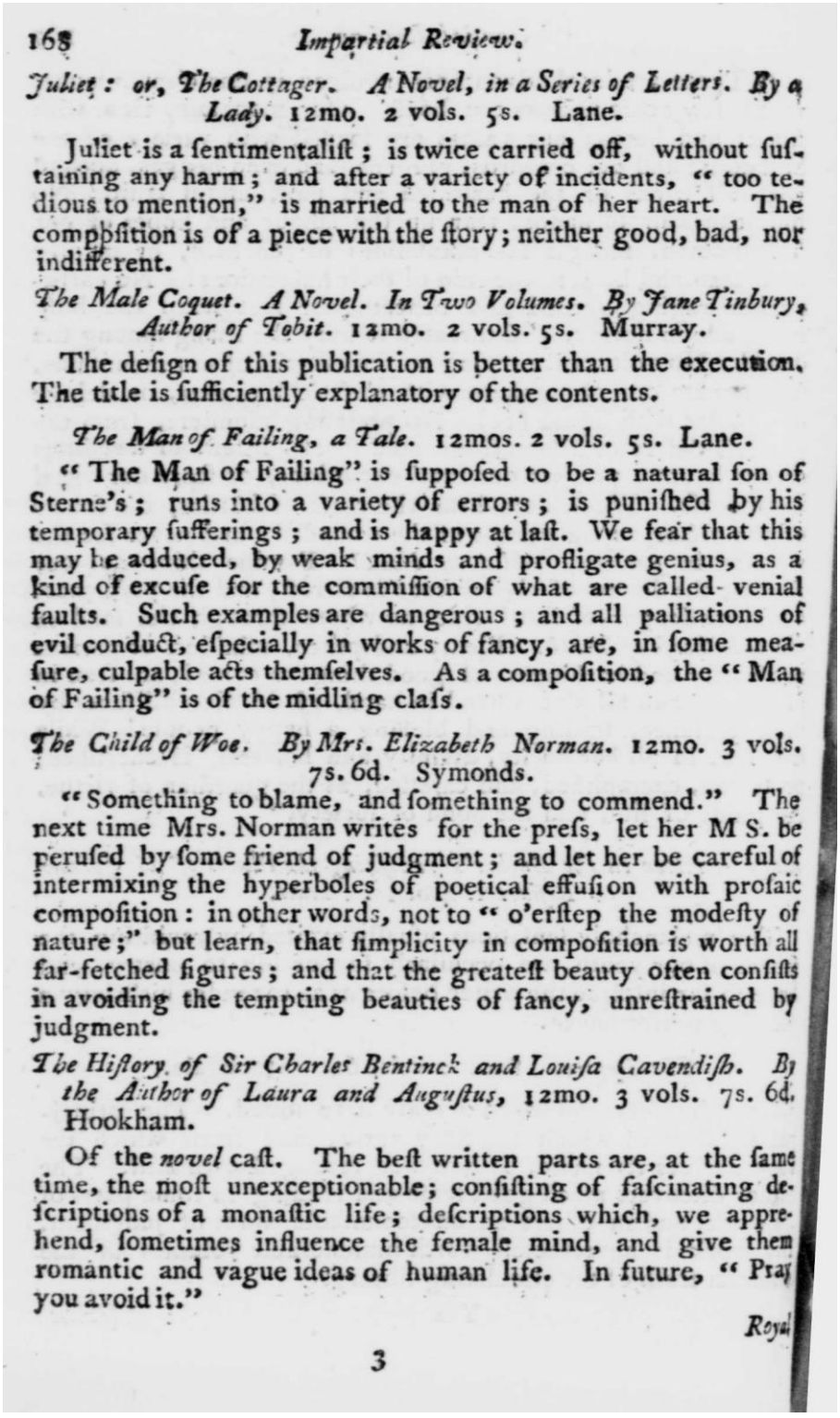
Figure 13: Title page of the pamphlet *Memoirs of the Life of Mrs. A___a W___t ….*[6]

[6] *Memoirs of the life of Mrs. A-a W-t. ….* London: printed and sold by W. Reeve, in Fleet-Street; and A. Dodd, opposite St. Clement's Church, in the Strand, [1750]. *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (accessed October 29, 2017). Gale Document Number: GALE|CW0103910467.

Reviews may also influence reader interpretation through form, such as adding titles to page headings, and through language so that extreme violence towards women is trivialised by comic expression. In some reviews, the terms used to summarise the abduction plot differ from that used in the novel, resulting in different judgements about its function.

It should not surprise us that reviews foreground exciting episodes to attract the attention of readers, particularly given the close links between reviewing, bookselling, and novelists in the eighteenth century. What is surprising is how often reviews focused on sexual violence towards women. Indeed, a series of reviews on a single page such as in the *General Magazine and Impartial Review* of April 1789 (see figure 14) highlights violent behaviour towards women by condensing and simplifying plots of complexly-plotted novels and in doing so creates a discourse of aggression. This effect is separate from their individual function as advertisements for specific novels.

This single page contains reviews of five novels, all of which are condemned as either tedious, dangerous, hyperbolic, or romantic. The first review condemns *Juliet or The Cottager: A Novel in a series of Letters* as ‘too tedious to mention’. It compresses the plot into a single act, which is the abduction of the heroine: ‘Juliet is a sentimentalist; is twice carried off, without suffering any harm’. The novel is described as ‘neither good, bad nor indifferent’. The comments on the remaining novels are similarly derisive. *The Man of Failing* contains ‘a variety of errors’ that



168 *Impartial Review.*

Juliet: or, The Cottager. A Novel, in a Series of Letters. By a Lady. 12mo. 2 vols. 5s. Lane.

Juliet is a ſentimentaliſt; is twice carried off, without ſuſtaining any harm; and after a variety of incidents, "too tedious to mention," is married to the man of her heart. The compoſition is of a piece with the ſtory; neither good, bad, nor indifferent.

The Male Coquet. A Novel. In Two Volumes. By Jane Tinbury, Author of Tobit. 12mo. 2 vols. 5s. Murray.

The deſign of this publication is better than the execution. The title is ſufficiently explanatory of the contents.

The Man of Failing, a Tale. 12mos. 2 vols. 5s. Lane.

"The Man of Failing" is ſuppoſed to be a natural ſon of Sterne's; runs into a variety of errors; is puniſhed by his temporary ſufferings; and is happy at laſt. We fear that this may be adduced, by weak minds and profligate genius, as a kind of excuſe for the commiſſion of what are called venial faults. Such examples are dangerous; and all palliations of evil conduct, eſpecially in works of fancy, are, in ſome meaſure, culpable acts themſelves. As a compoſition, the "Man of Failing" is of the midling claſs.

The Child of Woe. By Mrs. Elizabeth Norman. 12mo. 3 vols. 7s. 6d. Symonds.

"Something to blame, and ſomething to commend." The next time Mrs. Norman writes for the preſs, let her MS. be peruſed by ſome friend of judgment; and let her be careful of intermixing the hyperboles of poetical effuſion with proſaic compoſition: in other words, not to "o'erſtep the modeſty of nature;" but learn, that ſimplicity in compoſition is worth all far-fetched figures; and that the greateſt beauty often conſiſts in avoiding the tempting beauties of fancy, unreſtrained by judgment.

The Hiſtory of Sir Charles Bentinck and Louiſa Cavendiſh. By the Author of Laura and Auguſtus, 12mo. 3 vols. 7s. 6d. Hookham.

Of the *novel* caſt. The beſt written parts are, at the ſame time, the moſt unexceptionable; conſiſting of faſcinating deſcriptions of a monaſtic life; deſcriptions which, we apprehend, ſometimes influence the female mind, and give them romantic and vague ideas of human life. In future, "Pray you avoid it."

Royal

3

Figure 14: *General Magazine and Impartial Review* (April 1789), 168.

encourage 'weak minds' to commit 'venial faults'. *The History of Sir Charles Bentinck and Louisa Cavendish* is especially dangerous for women readers because it may 'influence the female mind, and give them romantic and vague ideas of human life'. When read as a series, this page of short comments on five different novels offers a narrative of immorality and violence.[7] I have not read each of these novels to compare the comments with the actual content of the novel. However, my point here is that reviews in this form give the impression that another batch of novels has been published that highlights an immoral society and aggressive attitudes towards women.

The phrasing of the *General Magazine and Impartial Review*'s comment on *Juliet* indicates that it may have been extracted from Mary Wollstonecraft's earlier piece in the *Analytical Review* in which she suggested that violence towards women was a defining factor in literary history (see figure 15).[8] Wollstonecraft posits a progression in the function of the abduction plot citing novels from Richardson to Burney in which plots involving violent assault displaced chivalric romances. She argued that *Juliet* looks back to earlier times romances and sentimentalises the happy resolution so that the heroine's abduction ordeal is not physically threatening, rather she is deceived by flattery. The heroine may not be assaulted but she remains

[7] Turner points out that female reviewers criticised fellow women writers and observes that there was no 'sense of common cause or approval' amongst them, 129.
[8] 'Book Review', *The Analytical Review: Or, History of Literature*, 3 (March, 1789), 345. For information on reviews by Mary Wollstonecraft see *The Works of Mary Wollstonecraft,* ed. by Janet Todd and Marilyn Butler, vol 7 (London: William Pickering, 1989); Mitzi Myers, 'Mary Wollstonecraft's Literary Reviews', in *The Cambridge Companion to Mary Wollstonecraft*, ed. by Claudia L. Johnson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 82-98, and Mary Beth Tegan, 'Mocking the Mothers of the Novel: Mary Wollstonecraft, Maternal Metaphor, and the Reproduction of Sympathy', *Studies in the Novel*, 42.4 (December, 2010), 357-376. Tegan discusses Wollstonecraft's review of *Juliet* and notes that 'literary action becomes increasingly languid in Wollstonecraft's brief history' of the novel, 360.

physically vulnerable. The author of *Juliet*, she observed, 'has tripped back' to a plot more akin to the pre-Richardsonian plot where 'the *sentimental* heroine is twice carried off, but no harm ensues, except that she is hurried by sorrow to the very brink of the grave, when her true love opportunely appears to bid her revive'.[9]

In some reviews, the suggestion that the heroine has been violently abducted is not a true reflection of the novel. For example, the *Critical Review* described the titular heroine in *Adeline de Courcy* (1798) as 'trepanned'. We know that this term was used to imply abduction in newspapers and novels. For example, we have noted its use in the initial news reports that described Ann Brookhouse's ordeal and in the piece about the young ward of court 'trepanned' from her father's house and discussed in chapter two.[10] It is also employed by Charlotte Smith to describe Medora's abduction in *The Young Philosopher*. However, in *Adeline de Courcy*, 'trepanned' refers to parental pressure to marry and not to the heroine's abduction. This is not clear from the review, which could be read to mean that the heroine is the victim of abduction and forced marriage:

[9] *The Analytical Review*, March 1789, 345. Another review stated that the novel was 'Trifiling, insipid, without a sentence or character worth of praise', *Town and Country Magazine, Or, Universal Repository of Knowledge, Instruction, and Entertainment*, 21 (April, 1789), 175. This comment appears to have been taken from the *Critical Review*'s piece of March 1789. The *Monthly Review* described the plot as comprised of 'threadbare materials' but the abduction is not mentioned as one of the stock motifs, N., Art. 34. Juliet; Or the Cottager: In a Series of Letters, by a Lady, *Monthly Review, Or, Literary Journal, 1752-1825*, 4 (January, 1791), 91. I have not yet been able to locate a copy of *Juliet, or the Cottager*. It would be interesting to discover whether Wollstonecraft's assessment is a harsher criticism of the heroine than in the novel.

[10] See Appendix A, Table 2, no. 39 and chapter two, page 105 respectively.

ART. XXXIII. *Juliet: or, The Cottager. A Novel, in a Series of Letters.* By a Lady. 2 vol. 12mo. 445 p. Price 5s. ſewed. Lane. 1789.

IT has been judiciouſly obſerved by one of our brother Reviewers, that the publication of Miſs Burney's novels formed a new æra in this flimſy kind of writing. A varied combination of the ſame events has been adopted, and like timid ſheep, the lady authors jump over the hedge one after the other, and do not dream of deviating either to the right or left. Richardſon deſtroyed the giants and dwarfs that figured away in romances, and ſubſtituted old ugly women to keep the beauteous damſel in durance vile; however ſhe had ſtill to protect her chaſtity with vigilant care againſt violent aſſaults, and after having paſſed unſullied through the ordeal trial, a *demi*-hero freed her, and matrimony wound up the plot, &c. &c.

Now the method is altered; the fortreſs is not ſtormed, but undermined, and the belles muſt guard their hearts from the ſoft contagion, and not liſten to the inſidious ſigh, when the hand is gently preſſed, nor truſt the equivocal proteſtations of love—and then they obtain a huſband, &c. &c.

The author of this novel has tripped back; the *ſentimental* heroine is twice carried off, but no harm enſues, except that ſhe is hurried by ſorrow to the very brink of the grave, when her true love opportunely appears to bid her revive, and the drooping flower raiſes its head, to lean on the offered ſupport.

More minute criticiſm on this novel would be abſurd, as it ſinks before diſcriminate cenſure.

Figure 15: Mary Wollstonecraft's review of *Juliet or The Cottager: A Novel in a series of Letters*

> This story is of the common cast. Adeline is trepanned into a marriage with a villain, while her heart is engaged to M. Solignac, who revenges her wrongs upon this villain by killing him in a duel, and receives the fair hand of Adeline as his reward. In *novels*, this occurs very frequently.[11]

The discrepancy between the expectation raised by the review in its use of the word 'trepanned' and its application in the novel leads to uncertainty about what the review considered to occur 'very frequently' – violent abduction or parental pressure to agree to an arranged marriage.

The format of a review is also important to the perception of abduction as a violent crime. For example, the *Gentleman's Magazine*'s review of Eliza Haywood's *The Invisible Spy* (1754) chose a narrative of abduction and rape from amongst the thirty or so individual stories that comprise the novel.[12] The review begins with an invective against masquerades followed by a comprehensive retelling of the abduction story. The few omissions and light paraphrasing do not amount to a summary nor do they obscure the brutality of the abduction and rape. A headline was added to each page that condenses the plot into a succession of single statements. These headings inform the reader of a direct link between masquerades, abduction, and rape:

> *Affecting Masquerade Adventure*
>
> *Mingled Company at a Masquerade*
>
> *A Lady treacherously carried off from the Masquerade*

[11] 'Ad Line De Courcy', *The Critical Review: Or, Annals of Literature,* 22 (February, 1798), 238.
[12] 'Some Account of the INVISIBLE SPY, Lately Published, in Four Volumes', *The Gentleman's Magazine and Historical Chronicle, January 1736-December 1833,* 24 (December, 1754), 560-566; Eliza Haywood, *The Invisible Spy* (1754) ed. by Carol Stewart (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2014).

Returns in great Distress

Matilda's Account of her Adventure

Conduct of Alexis upon it[13]

However, omitting the headings allows the narrative to support other interpretations such as the consequences to women where men are also inexperienced in city life and lack of social awareness or the licentiousness of a decadent aristocracy. There are at least three points of view involved in presenting and interpreting this novel: the reviewer's, the editor's (assuming the editor and not the reviewer was responsible for the headlines), and the reader. Thus, authorial intention may be lost in the reviewer's focalisation of the plot and the editor's choice of headlines.

Reviews, therefore, are as open to interpretation as the novels they discuss. They are judgemental about works that involve violence towards women. I suggest that these judgemental attitudes have an accumulative effect and in some cases create a discourse of aggression in magazines and journals to which their readers are exposed whether or not they read the novels.

The vocabulary of abduction in novels

We should not assume that the meaning of 'abduction' and the terms used to describe the act of abduction in eighteenth-century fiction are stable.[14] As the *OED* states, 'the legal definition of abduction has varied over time and between legal systems'.[15] I note in a previous chapter that abduction was not a single crime. In

[13] *Gentleman's Magazine*, December 1754, 560-566.
[14] Nancy Armstrong notes that Samuel Johnson 'claimed he was prompted to compile his *Dictionary* because English was changing so rapidly, that without some standardisation of meaning, the writing of his day would be unintelligible to the next generation', *Desire and Domestic Fiction*, 144.
[15] 'abduction, n.', *OED Online*, Oxford University Press <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/215> [accessed 18 March 2017].

particular, it was associated with sexual assault, an association underlined by Johnson's description of rape: 'The parliament conceived, that the obtaining of women by force into possession, howsoever afterwards assent might follow by allurements, was but a *rape* drawn forth in length, because the first force drew on all the rest'.[16] Furthermore, the *OED* references Blackstone's use of abduction to describe 'kidnapping' as the 'forcible abduction or stealing away of a man, woman or child from their own country, and sending them into another'. This legal meaning of 'abduction' affected the way it was used and understood. Furthermore, it was undoubtedly associated with violence so that in novels, being forcibly carried away was 'the vilest of plots'.[17] However, the fictional abduction plot is a more versatile device than this narrative of aggression implies. In the following discussion of lesser known novels, I suggest that the abduction plot is associated with multiple contexts and that both genders are victims and perpetrators. I aim to show that the abduction plot may be a familiar literary motif but this familiarity disguised a complex narrative of a woman's role in the social hierarchy.

Not all of the abduction plots and scenes in the novels I discuss are based on male violence, instigated by male villains, or achieved through overwhelming force. Some abductions are carried out by women and sometimes the female perpetrator carries out an abduction at the behest of a man.[18] We have seen that the motives that

[16] Johnson's definition of 'rape' was brought to my attention by Isabel Grundy's essay, 'Seduction Pursued by Other Means? The Rape, in *Clarissa*', in Flynn and Copeland, *Clarissa and Her Readers*, 255-267. Johnson defined 'abduction' as a medical term and as a form of argument.
[17] Mary Champion De Crespigny, *The Pavilion: A Novel*, in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, 4 vols (London: Minerva Press, 1796), IV:34.
[18] Nancy Armstrong suggests that female characters are menacing forces and only relinquish their aggressive tendencies once married: 'It is not only in the Brontës' novels that extraordinary violence accompanies a shift to something resembling a matrilineal order', *Desire and Domestic Fiction*, 53.

drive fictional abduction plots, such as primogeniture, sexual desire, avarice, and prostitution, are also important issues to eighteenth-century women as documented by contemporary newspapers. Furthermore, as we have seen, the historical record shows that abduction was carried out by seduction and deception as well as by physical force and this situation was paralleled in novels. In addition, fictional abduction plots often focus on a woman's complicity in, or culpability for, her abduction. In many novels, abduction without seduction was survivable but seduction nearly always resulted in a woman's ruined reputation.

The vocabulary of 'abduction' in novels closely parallels that found in newspapers. There are examples from the historical record where 'abduction' meant the taking away of a person by force, such as in the famous case of Jean Key in 1754: 'Robert McGregor, alias Campbel, alias Robert Roy, for Hamesucken and forcible Abduction of Jean Key, Heiress of Edinbelly.'[19] The term 'abduction' was still regarded as being an example of 'modern' usage at the beginning of the nineteenth century. A piece in the *Morning Chronicle* of 12 February 1811 used the word to describe the forcible removal of a young woman from her home and referred to its use in this context as 'modern phraseology':

> An outrageous instance of what in modern phraseology is termed "abduction", took place not far from Galway, on Saturday night. […] Honora Campbell, […] sought protection from an unexpected attempt at the house of Mr. James Molony, of Dooras, in the parish of Feacle.[20]

She traces the development of the sexual contract (female submission in return for male protection) in the novel, *Desire and Domestic Fiction*, 48-58.

[19] Appendix A, Table 2, no. 16. Hamesucken is the crime of assaulting a person in his own house or dwelling place now only used in Scots law (*OED Online*, Oxford University Press 'hamesucken | hamesoken, n', OED Online <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/83723> September 2016, Oxford University Press [accessed 18 March 2017].

[20] Appendix A, Table 2, no. 44.

The action of taking away a woman by force was not a new crime but the *Morning Chronicle* was keen to point out that what was new (in its opinion) was giving that crime a specific name. This new name for an ancient crime was not often used in the eighteenth-century lexicon.

We have seen in the previous chapter that terms used by newspapers to report abduction as lived experience include 'inveigled', 'decoyed', and 'trepanned' and we also find these terms in novels. Johnson defined 'inveigle' as 'to persuade to something bad or hurtful, to wheedle, to allure, to seduce'; 'decoy' as 'to lure into a cage; to intrap; to draw into a snare' and as 'allurement to mischiefs', and 'trepan', as previously noted, was defined as 'a stratagem by which anyone is ensnared' and 'to catch; to ensnare'.[21] All imply deception so that to be abducted was to be deceived as well as to be the victim of violence.

The most commonly used word is 'elope' and it is a particularly slippery word. As previously noted, Johnson defined it as 'to run away; to break loose; to escape from law or restraint' and 'elopement' as 'departure from just restraint; rejection of lawful power.' To elope, therefore, is to challenge legal authority. 'Elope' in contemporary newspapers is used to describe a variety of events: couples elope to Gretna Green; apprentices elope from their masters, and wives elope from their husbands, not necessarily in the company of a lover. This diverse meaning is paralleled in novels.

[21] The *OED* includes 'entrap', 'ensnare' 'beguile', 'lure' and 'inveigle' as definitions of 'trepan'.

The variety of circumstances to which the term 'elope' applies affects readers' interpretation of the event that is being described. For example, the disappearance of a Scottish Baronet or an Irish Knight (the newspapers are not quite sure which) and a Marquis's daughter in June 1797, was reported in various newspapers. The Baron (or Knight):

'conducted' (*Whitehall Evening Post 1770*);

'eloped' (*London Packet or New Lloyd's Evening Post*, the *Whitehall Evening Post*, and the *True Briton*);

'set off with' (*London Evening Post* and the *True Briton*);

'carried off' (*Lloyd's Evening Post*, *Morning Post and Fashionable World*, and *Oracle and Public Advertiser*);

made an 'unexpected flight' (*Bell's Weekly* Messenger); or

'accompanied' (*True Briton*) the Marquis's daughter to Gretna Green.[22]

Each term suggests a different interpretation of the event. The Marquis's daughter is either a willing accomplice, the victim of a forced abduction, or the instigator of an adventure. The choice of language in each piece obscures the nature of the event so that a single interpretation is impossible.

The vocabulary of 'abduction' in novels reflects this complexity. The term 'abduction' is rarely found. Instead, phrases such as 'carried away' and 'forced away' are employed. The specific term used to describe the act of abduction is related to the context in which it is used and the character employing the term. In some novels where 'carried off' is used, the nature of abduction is clear such as in

[22] Full references to the newspapers quoted are given at Appendix B, Table 1, no. 114.

Mrs Thompson's *Fatal Follies: or the History of the Countess of Stanmore* (1788). This novel fictionalised the disastrous marriage of the Countess of Strathmore to Andrew Robinson Stoney who subjected his wife to considerable violence. The *English Review* referred to the Countess's abduction by her husband: 'Seabright [representing Stoney] and his associates carry her off, and compel her to sign papers which give him the command of her estate.'[23] In this context, the phrase 'carry her off' means violently abducted and we know that the abduction was violent from the historical record of the Countess of Strathmore's divorce case.[24] Readers who knew the true-life events on which the novel was based would interpret 'carry off' as a violent act.

However, the phrase can also obscure abduction rather than describe it. To 'carry off' is related to the cultural convention that a woman must not express partiality for her admirer before he has admitted his attraction to her.[25] This attitude frequently drives the plots of domestic fiction. To be carried off, therefore, did not necessarily mean to be abducted either by violence or by deception and this ambiguity leads to blurring the distinction between abduction as a violent and non-consensual act and as a consensual (and possibly romantic) elopement in fiction.

---

[23] 'ART. 21, Fatal Follies: Or, the History of the Countess of Stanmore', *English Review: Or, an Abstract of English and Foreign Literature, 1783-1795,* 11 (January, 1788), 67.
[24] The story of the Countess's disastrous marriage is told by Wendy Moore, *Wedlock: How Georgian Britain's Worst Husband Met his Match* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2009).
[25] Mark Kinkead-Weekes identified this cultural convention as the difficulty Clarissa encounters when Lovelace appears to offer marriage. Clarissa 'acknowledges the code which forbids a woman to reveal her feelings to her lover before he has decorously asked for her hand', *Samuel Richardson: Dramatic Novelist* (London: Methuen, 1973), 188-189. Richardson applauded this convention in his essay for *The Rambler* in which he pronounced women who did not have the 'patience and decency to stay till they were sought' as '*Seekers*', 'Untitled Item', *The Rambler*, 2.97 (19 February 1751), 234-241 (235).

There are examples in reviews. The *Critical Review*'s piece on Charlotte Smith's *The Old Manor House* (1793) included reference to what appears to be a planned abduction: 'colonel Tracey, an old beau of sixty-five, enamoured of Orlando's sister Isabella, comes on a visit […] with a determined purpose to seduce and carry her off'.[26] However, other reviews of this novel do not imply deception and abduction. They ignore the Colonel's preliminary seduction plan and jump straight to the elopement: 'the eldest daughter elopes with an officer in the same regiment'.[27] So, readers' understanding of the plot would depend on which review they read. The episode could be interpreted as an intention to seek consensual marriage; as a persuasion to elope, or as a plan to deceive and perpetuate a violent abduction.

Some journals took a conservative approach and blunt the nuances associated with abduction by interpreting such scenes as consensual elopement without the suggestion of violence. We can see this in the heroine's sudden disappearance in the anonymously published *The Pavilion: A Novel* (1796). The heroine's abduction is variously referred to as an elopement with her lover; an escape from a difficult situation, or abduction by a man intent on seduction. These differing interpretations illustrate the fluidity of meaning associated with the abduction/seduction plot that obscured its inherent violence. The *Analytical Review* preferred the latter interpretation, the heroine 'is snatched […] from approaching felicity by a new

[26] 'The Old Maner House: A Novel', *The Critical Review: Or, Annals of Literature*, 8 (May, 1793), 44-54 (50).
[27] 'ART. V, The Old Manor House: a Novel', *English Review: Or, an Abstract of English and Foreign Literature, 1783-1795*, 21 (April, 1793), 264-270 (265).

scheme of an old lover, forcibly carried off, and rescued by her favoured knight'.[28] The *English Review* summarised the plot as the heroine leaving voluntarily when she 'overhears' a plan to abduct her.[29] These differing interpretations suggest that readers would find reviews unreliable indicators of the nature of abduction plots and scenes.

So, reviews add complexity to the network of social and cultural discourses of abduction by isolating specific episodes and condensing and simplifying novels so that they become unreliable as a source of information about the nature of the abduction plot. In many cases, the story is compressed resulting in the subtle nuances of plot being blurred and, as a consequence, the abduction plot is reinterpreted. In this way, as reviews mediate between the novel and the reader, they could be seen as misleading. Reviews that smooth out the nuances of plot lead to a discourse of aggression that depicts women as vulnerable to violence and made powerless by the misuse of male authority.

Narrating the abduction motif

We have seen that the abduction motif can be a complex narrative device. Spacks observes that 'Abducted, sexually threatened maidens appear with such regularity in eighteenth-century plots that they seem hardly more than a literary convention.'[30] A literary convention suggests a shared understanding between the author and the reader about the meaning of a particular narrative device. I have pointed out that such a shared understanding was disrupted by reviews.

[28] 'ART. IX, the Pavilion, *The Analytical Review: Or, History of Literature,* 23.6 (June, 1796), 601.
[29] ART. XXVII. the Pavilion; a Novel', *English Review of Literature, Science, Discoveries, Inventions, and Practical Controversies and Contests*, 28 (August, 1796), 181-184 (181).
[30] Spacks, *Desire and Truth*, 190.

Spacks argues that the 'meaning' behind the abduction motif is 'uncovered' by Richardson (and others) in whose fiction 'men and women engage in ferocious power struggles' so that 'A sometimes breathtaking sense of sexual antagonism permeates these fictions.'[31] She links the abduction motif to a discourse of power and sexual aggression. I suggest that other contexts such as deception, avarice, and theft are also important to abduction narratives in novels.

In the discussion that follows, I concentrate on the taxonomy of abduction in lesser known novels. These novels were read by the same community of readers that read the novels which form today's literary canon: 'readers would not have dreamed of limiting themselves to less than half-a-dozen authors when new and exciting stories were coming off the presses and into the libraries every day'.[32] The simplistic rhetorical strategies of these lesser known novels make clear the links between abduction and other criminal or abusive actions.[33] The characters are normally two-dimensional representations of a particular attribute and lack interiority but the plots provide space for a detailed discussion of the abduction motif and its association with multiple contexts. As Spacks points out, lesser known novels are 'more transparent in their ideological commitments'.[34]

---

[31] Ibid.
[32] Philippa Gregory, 'The Popular Fiction of the Eighteenth Century Commercial Circulating Libraries' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1984), 1-2. Gregory does not separate seduction and abduction in her computer analysis of lesser known eighteenth-century fiction.
[33] Pearson observes that contemporaries argued that 'at worst novels offered "entertainment" and an "innocent" escape from the "anxieties" of real life, and at best a "thorough knowledge of human nature", "noble sentiments", "a useful and impressive moral lesson", "moral truth, and ... virtue"'. She also observes that contemporary thought argued that novel-reading kept women from worse pastimes, "cards, scandal, and the toilet", *Women's Reading in Britain 1750-1835*, 84.
[34] Spacks, *Desire and Truth*, 9.

We can see abduction as a discourse of power and sexual aggression in the *Monthly Review*'s article on Catherine Selden's gothic romance, *The Count De Santerre* (1797).[35] The *Review* praised the abduction scene as an example of Selden's ability as an author. It is one of those 'gloomy and horrid scenes, on which the authoress exerts all her powers of description' (199). Here is an extract from the scene:

> Terrified to the last degree, she took up her lamp, and ran as fast as she could along the gallery, with design to alarm the family. But she was too late; already several men were in the great hall […] two of them rushed forwards and seized hold of her. Surprise and terror deprived her of the power even of shrieking; but the ruffians […] gagged and bound her; and tying a handkerchief over her eyes […] hurried her down stairs. (200)

The abduction scene is considerably violent. On reading the novel, it is clear that the subtleties of the plot, in which the heroine is assigned responsibility for her actions but not complicity in her abduction, are not obvious from the review.

The *Monthly Review*'s decision to reprint the abduction scene in its entirety is interesting because in the novel the scene reads as an isolated segment making it an ideal episode for extraction. The novel overall conforms to the genre of Gothic fiction in its use of stock motifs, opposing narratives and characters, and complex relationships.[36] Its plot is structured by abduction, which the principal female

[35] 'NOVELS', 'The Count de Santerre', *Monthly Review: Or, Literary Journal, 1752-1825*, 24 (October, 1797), 199-202 (200). Further references are given after quotations in the text.
[36] Catherine Selden, *The Count de Santerre: A Romance*, in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, 2 vols (Bath: R. Crutwell, 1797). Further references are given after quotations in the text. Frederick S. Frank describes the novel as 'a synthesis of events and characters' from Ann Radcliffe's *The Romance of the Forest* (1791) and *The Italian* (1797)', *The First Gothics: A Critical Guide to the English Gothic Novel* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1987), 341. Catherine Selden published her novel anonymously but is recorded as the author in *The English Novel 1770-1829: A Bibliographical Survey of Prose Fiction Published in the British Isles*, ed. by Peter Garside and others, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), I:1770-1800 (2000).

characters all suffer. The story narrates the heroine's ability to survive various ordeals and culminates in her glorious marriage to her preferred choice. The plot is the unravelling of a series of complex relationships that connect the characters to each other. These characters are all stock types: heroes, heroines, villains, and loquacious servants. The women are exemplary or immoral but all are obedient to male authority. The story is told by narrativised discourse and interpolation as the two-dimensional and static characters recount their history and uncover links in the central mystery concerning the villainous Count de Santerre. There is some dialogue but the objective narrator does not allow unmediated access to the internal thoughts of the characters. The story is told mainly in summary with some scenes being stretched to signify their importance to the plot. The heroine's abduction is one such scene. It contributes to the discourse of an immoral aristocracy and the narrative shifts from telling to showing thus signifying the scene as a key literary moment. It stands apart from the complex chain of relationships and this suggests that the scene may have been deliberately constructed as an enticing extract for a review piece.

The *Critical Review* did not reprint the abduction scene as part of its review. It condemned the novel as comprising 'the usual furniture of modern romances' but recognised Selden's 'considerable descriptive powers' without isolating the abduction scene.[37] The piece suggested that Selden would be 'employed to much better purpose' than on 'a romance abounding in such gross improbabilities'.[38] The *Monthly Visitor, and pocket companion* also commented on the novel's improbable

[37] 'The Count De Santerre: A Romance', *The Critical Review: Or, Annals of Literature,* 21 (November, 1797), 354.
[38] Ibid.

plot. Its succinct summary incorporated the abduction scene using 'forced away' as a description of the act. The piece made it clear that the heroine's abduction was violent and that her refusal to co-operate meant death: 'as she would not consent to be his wife, to perpetrate her death'.[39] The piece suggests that the scene is only rendered improbable by the inclusion of a supernatural event: 'after all the horror which such a ruffian-scene ought naturally to inspire' a 'blast' of wind causes the armour in the castle to shake, 'A most comfortable climax! Just cool enough to destroy the most affecting incident, and convince us, that all is *unnatural*'.[40] So, violent abduction by a gang of ruffians in the pay of an evil aristocrat intent on marriage or murder would be a possibility if it were not for supernatural intervention.

The abduction scene in *The Count de Santarre* is a dramatic incident, exciting, and mysterious and free from the convoluted interrelationships that dominate the plot. The form of the scene suggests that it is designed specifically as a segment suitable for extraction. However, in doing so, its context is lost. In the novel, the victim is not as vulnerable as the scene suggests. As an extract for a review, the abduction scene is an episode of female vulnerability to male aggression designed to whet the appetite of prospective readers.

The Count de Santarre was published at the end of the century when Gothic fiction was extremely popular and its theme of villainous aristocracy inspired by ungovernable passion was a stock gothic romance plot. Gothic fiction, of course, is

[39] 'Book Review', *The Monthly Visitor, and Pocket Companion, July 1797-Dec.1800*, 2 (July, 1797) 73-77 (73). This review extracts the narrative of a servant and recounts a dramatic episode of death in childbirth but at a point at which the reader is not fully acquainted with the relationship between this episode and the titular villain, thus illustrating the perplexities of gothic romances, which is the main complaint of the review.
[40] Ibid, 74-75.

all about disguise but in this novel the threat of sexual aggression is explicit. The *Monthly Review*'s piece made this clear by describing the heroine as 'bound', 'gagged' and 'hurried' away and 'doubted not that she was destined a victim to lawless violence' (201).

In reviews of other novels, the violence associated with abduction is obscured. Terms such as 'conveyed' suggest secrecy but imply a less aggressive action. Johnson defined 'convey' as 'to carry; to transport from one place to another' or 'to move secretly', which suggests that its use to imply abduction obscures the inherent violence of the act.

'Conveyed' as a means to describe the titular heroine's violent abduction by a libertine appeared in reviews of Sarah Scott's novel, *The History of Cornelia* (1750).[41] The function of abduction in this novel is related to its structure, which 'is on a simple accretive principle of recurring adventures' and which becomes at the end of the novel an 'absurdly baroque series of mishaps' that keep the hero and heroine apart.[42] The heroine is subjected to three successful abductions, an attempted abduction, and a threat of abduction. Elizabeth Napier points out that 'suffering becomes the truest text of character' in 'sentimental tales'.[43] However, this extreme

[41] Sarah Scott, *The History of Cornelia*, in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (London: A Millar, 1750). Further references are given after quotations in the text. I also consulted a reprint of this edition ed. by Caroline Franklin, British Women Novelists 1750-1850 (London: Routledge/Thoemmes Press, 1992: repr. 1750 edition).
[42] Elizabeth R. Napier, 'Sarah Scott', *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, British Novelists: 1660-1800, ed. by Martin C. Battestin, vol 39 (Michigan: Gale Research, 1985), part II:413-418 (414; 415). Furthermore, Betty Rizzo argued that the heroine's 'romantic adventures' are 'genuine gothic trials' but there is a lack of 'emotional affect' because 'the heroine refuses to suffer and rigorously retains her rational outlook', 'Renegotiating the Gothic', in *Revising Women: Eighteenth-Century "Women's Fiction" and Social Engagement* ed. by Paula R. Backscheider (London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 58-103 (67-68).
[43] Napier, 414.

level of physical aggression does not depict a woman helpless in the face of violence. Carolyn Franklin points out that greater emphasis is put on the heroine's 'spirited defence […] than on her vulnerability'.[44]

The heroine's defining attribute is integrity depicted through the successful evasion of seduction and abduction and her attempts to employ wealth to alleviate poverty. Franklin points at that the *Monthly Review* identified a 'new note of moral earnestness' in the novel.[45] She agrees with this comment and suggests that *Cornelia* 'probably indicates a conscious attempt to use the novel form for serious purposes'.[46] Franklin identifies Cornelia's abduction by the libertine, De Rhee, as 'linked with her deprivation of wealth'.[47] In this novel, the abduction plot functions as a means to create a narrative of female agency demonstrating resistance to the male discourse of power and sexual aggression. Betty Rizzo pointed out that Cornelia's trials are 'pure gothic but she never waivers or dispairs'.[48]

The *Monthly Review*'s piece on *Cornelia* commented on the abduction for sexual exploitation plot but did not reflect the violence associated with the event:

> She afterwards lives with a lady of quality as her companion and friend; whom she reconciles to her daughter that had married without her consent; who in return gets *Cornelia* to be conveyed by a gentleman to his castle to minister to his pleasures.[49]

[44] *History of Cornelia*, Introduction by Carolyn Franklin, v-xvi (xii-xiii). Interestingly, Franklin's plot summary does not mention abduction.
[45] Ibid, xi.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Ibid, xii.
[48] Rizzo, 'Renegotiating the Gothic', 68.
[49] R., 'Book Review', *Monthly Review, 1749-1750,* 3 (May, 1750), 59-61 (60).

This review is important to my argument because it describes abduction as perpetrated with the connivance of a woman but the convoluted sentence structure helps to obscure this. The review did not employ the more obvious terms such as 'betrayed', 'decoyed', or 'carried away'. Rather, Cornelia 'gets […] to be conveyed'. In this way, the piece avoids making an explicit statement about the role of a 'lady of quality' in the abduction of a young woman under her protection and the violence associated with the act. The novel's abduction and sexual predation plot is singled out by the review. However, the language in the novel describes a more violent event than is signalled by the review. In the novel, Cornelia's abductors 'threatened her with death' (69), gag and bind her and she is 'carried […] off' (70) having fainted in terror.

The *Monthly Review*'s apparent caution about a plot that involved the heroine being mistaken for a prostitute may be linked to contemporary concerns about depicting prostitution as John Cleland's novel, *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* (1748), had been republished in 1750 and immediately banned for its licentious content.[50] The link between *Cornelia* and prostitution is one that is made today.[51] Napier compares Cornelia's abductor to Richardson's Lovelace and Ruth Perry compares Cornelia to Clarissa as 'the first heroine after Richardson's Clarissa […] to

[50] 'Last Friday the Author and Publishers of the memoirs of Fanny Hill were taken into Custody by his Majesty's Messengers, and all the Copies seized', *Whitehall Evening Post or London Intelligencer*, 17–20 March 1750, 'London Intelligence', 2.

[51] Victoria Joule points out that a link was made between 'bawdy literature' and novels by Charlotte Lennox (*The Life of Harriot Stuart*), John Cleland's *Fanny Hill*, and *Charlotte Summers* (published anonymously) and Lady Vane's memoirs (*Lady Frail*)', '"Heroines of their own romance": Creative Exchanges between Life Writing and Fiction, the "Scandalous Memoirists" and Charlotte Lennox', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 37.1 (March, 2014), 37-52 (49).

be terrified that she is being confused with prostitutes'.[52] The *Monthly Review* reinterpreted the abduction scene making it less violent and more opaque and avoided explicit reference to prostitution and sexual predation aided by an upper class woman. Perhaps the *Monthly Review* suppressed controversial elements of the abduction scene to emphasise the novel's moral tone.

Not all reviews are reluctant to associate sexual predation with abduction, particularly if a moral could be drawn from the scene. As previously mentioned, the *Gentleman's Magazine*'s review of Haywood's *The Invisible Spy* reprinted an extract that depicted a violent abduction and rape from a masquerade. The victim's husband's anguish is for himself as well as his wife:

> his dear *Matilda* had been carried off, but by whom, or to what place, were things which seemed altogether impossible for him to discover; and wanting the means either to prevent her ruin and his own dishonour, or to take vengeance on the ravisher, for the injury he had done to both, could not but fill him with reflections almost equally stabbing as the injury itself.[53]

Matilda and her husband are portrayed as equally affected: Matilda's abduction and rape is also her husband's disgrace. Haywood's characters are located within a narrative framework that mimics contemporary society. The attitude displayed by the husband, therefore, would be one that contemporary readers would recognise. Juliette Merritt points out that rather than condemning 'women's sexual behaviour

[52] Napier, 414; Ruth Perry, 'Sarah Scott', *Orlando: Women's Writing in the British Isles from the Beginnings to the Present*, ed. by Susan Brown, Patricia Clements, and Isobel Grundy. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press Online, 2006) <http://orlando.cambridge.org.ezproxy.is.ed.ac.uk/> [accessed 18 March 2017].
[53] *Gentleman's Magazine*, December, 1754, 562.

on moral grounds', Haywood's interest is in 'how a woman conducts herself in public in order to protect her reputation'.[54]

There is a voyeuristic component to this story that readers of a secret history novel probably relished. The most frequently explored topics are gaming and adultery and this makes the reviewer's choice of the only story about abduction intriguing. The novel was praised by the *Gentleman's Magazine* as comprising 'some lessons which every reader would do well to practice' and its focus on the abduction narrative was explained as, 'to gratify the curiosity of our readers'.[55] This suggests that an abduction scene involving violent sexual aggression would be an effective means to encourage sales.

The abduction plot in Haywood's novel portrays a vicious sexual crime and its inclusion in a secret history implies lived experience. The novel complies with the prevailing cultural attitude that women could be held responsible for inciting male sexual aggression and should work within the limits of patriarchy to understand and control this responsibility rather than challenge that attitude.

Deception is another common theme in the taxonomy of abduction in novels. Spacks points out that 'male rudeness, physical and verbal' is often a 'syndoche for sexual violence'.[56] We can see this in Mrs Woodfin's *The Auction* (1760), in which

[54] Juliette Merritt, 'Spying, Writing, Authority: Eliza Haywood's Bath Intrigues', *Studies in Eighteenth Century Culture* 30 (2001), (Johns Hopkins University Press), 183-199 (192). Bannet argues that secret history novels are a link between historical novels and fiction because they explore the private motives for public action, 'many of the domestic novel's thematic concerns descended directly from the spy's preoccupation with the concealed truth about other people's affairs', 'The Narrator as Invisible Spy: Eliza Haywood, Secret History and the Novel', *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* (University of Pennsylvania Press), 14.4 (Fall, 2014), 143-162 (158).
[55] *Gentleman's Magazine*, December 1754, 560.
[56] Spacks, *Desire and Truth*, 148.

abduction is linked to deception and sexual exploitation and the perpetrator is not necessarily the villain.[57] Ruth Perry includes *The Auction* in her list of novels that reinterpret *Clarissa*.[58] The novel comprises a number of abduction scenes but only the initial abduction of the heroine is perpetrated by a villainous character. The other abduction episodes are carried out by virtuous characters and imply that abduction is a prank performed by men for their amusement. These latter abduction scenes are narrated as romantic comedy which obscures the discourse of female vulnerability to male aggression.

The abduction scenes are included in the *Newcastle General Magazine*'s review.[59] Its compression of the plot smooths out the ambiguity in the heroine's initial abduction by the licentious Mr Barnet who plays the role of a gentleman concerned for her welfare. The familiar terms 'conveyed' and 'decoyed' are used to describe this abduction and from which all other ordeals flow. The review makes clear that the heroine is being deceived:

> she took lodgings near Gray's-Inn; but, in a few days, was burnt out by an accidental fire, and with difficulty reached the street in the night, half naked, and half distracted. In this forlorn condition she was accosted by an elderly gentleman, who pretended to be intimate with her aunt and Mr Barnet;

---

[57] *The Auction: a Modern Novel*, in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, 2 vols (Dublin, James Potts, 1760). Further references are given after quotations in the text. The novel was published anonymously but is attributed to Mrs Woodfin in James Raven, *British Fiction 1750-1770: A Chronological Check-list of Prose Fiction Printed in Britain and Ireland* (London: Associated University Presses, 1987), 176.

[58] Ruth Perry, 'Clarissa's Daughters: Or, The History of Innocent Betrayed: How Women Writers Rewrote Richardson', in Flynn and Copeland, 119-141 (124). Another novel, Mrs Mathews' *Simple Facts* (1793), is described by Isobel Grundy as 'sympathetically and respectfully' rewriting the abduction and forced marriage plots in *Clarissa*, 'A novel in a series of letters by a lady': Richardson and some Richardsonian novels', *Samuel Richardson: Tercentenary Essays*, ed. by Margaret Anne Doody and Peter Sabor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 223-236 (232).

[59] 'The Auction: A Modern Novel', *Newcastle General Magazine 1748-1760* (January, 1760), 28-33 (30). This review appears to be an unaccredited copy of *The Critical Review*'s article from December 1759, 'Art. V. the Auction: A Modern Novel', *The Critical Review: Or, Annals of Literature*, 8 (December, 1759), 452-458.

> conveyed her to his own lodging, purchased new cloaths for her, decoyed her, under fair pretences, to his country house, which was a den of the most villainous libertinism.[60]

The phrase 'fair pretences' indicates the heroine's abduction by deception (these 'fair pretences' include fire setting, a reference to *Clarissa*). In the novel, the heroine's innocence and her imminent danger is described with a simile: 'to be led like a Lamb to the Slaughter, for she was too much frightened to ask where she was going' (I:58). However, the review dispenses with such literary similes and makes it clear that the heroine is not complicit in her abduction.

The *Newcastle General Magazine*'s review includes descriptions of two other abduction scenes in which the chaste but naïve heroine is confused with a prostitute. The abduction ordeals reflect these opposing attributes. The hero abducts a prostitute, whom he has mistaken for the heroine, 'by a series of stratagems'.[61] The familiar 'decoy' is used and the tone is comedic: 'he took her into keeping, and consoled himself, for some time, for the loss of Fanny […] Then he turned her out of doors'.[62] In contrast, the heroine is 'decoyed in to a hackney chair, and conveyed to these lodgings, where Welldon employed all his arts upon her chastity; but she repulsed him'.[63] The heroine survives her abduction ordeal with her reputation intact because she resists seduction whereas the prostitute, who does not resist, is not saved. The lesson here is a warning that the fates of the victims are allied to

[60] *Newcastle General Magazine*, 30.
[61] Ibid, 31.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid, 32.

perceptions of morality and not that the perpetrators have committed violent acts of abduction for which they could be severely punished.[64]

In *The Auction*, the criminal act of 'stealing an heiress' is obscured by the narrative of romantic comedy in which the abduction scenes are expressed. The novel, however, uses stronger language than the review to condemn the abduction of heroine. In the novel, the heroine is described as 'trepan'd by some treacherous Villain' (II:68). The *Newcastle*'s piece foregrounds casual aggressive behaviour by men towards women and implied that abduction was a jolly adventure indulged in by men of good character as well as bad and which causes no harm to the victim who had been 'decoyed' and 'conveyed' rather than forcibly abducted.

Theft is another recurring theme in the taxonomy of abduction. The function of the abduction plot in many novels is to suggest that women are valued solely for their financial wealth and that their marriage is integral to the economic structure of society. The theft of property is of importance in abduction law:

> eighteenth-century Britain's priority with its abduction law was not protection of the woman or her chastity, but rather punishment of the abductor because his stealing an heiress was a "violation of property", which was considered as "a very great offense against the public".[65]

Abduction as theft is an important driver of the plot in Matilda Fitz John's *Joan!!!* (1796).[66] This novel interprets abduction as theft in economic terms. The

[64] In Scots law, rape could be a capital crime where 'a woman is thereby robbed of that which of all thing she is presumed to value most, her chastity and reputation.' Rape could not be committed 'on common prostitutes' because they had 'already lost' their 'chastity and reputation', Erskine, II:1202.
[65] Schwarz, 292.
[66] Matilda Fitz John, *Joan!!! A Novel, in Four Volumes*, in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (London: Hookham and Carpenter, 1796). Further references are given after quotations in the text. *Worldcat* states that Matilda Fitz John is a pseudonym. This novel was not a commercial success.

English Review's piece did not summarise the plot because the novel was 'of too great a length and intricacy' to condense but it did refer to the abduction plot as an act of theft: the villain dispatches a servant 'to steal his infant daughter, Elizabeth, from his wife'.[67] The verb 'to steal' reflects the language of the novel. Joan 'could not believe that the child was stolen on the common motives of plunder' (I:231). Johnson defined 'plunder' as 'to pillage; to rob in a hostile way' and was normally associated with war. The reviewer did not use the term so this strong language was softened by the review. 'Plunder' is the point of view of the wronged woman whereas the review implied that the child's abduction was a benign act: 'Mr Byram determines to dedicate much of his time in forming the mind of Elizabeth, and giving her every accomplishment'.[68] In both the review and the novel, the victim is depersonalised and turned into a commodity that could be stolen and used for whatever purpose the current owner saw fit. However, the review reinterpreted this action to focus on what it deemed to be a desirable outcome.

So, the vocabulary of abduction in reviews suggests that judgements made by reviewers about the violence of the act and the complicity or culpability of the heroine could differ in degree from that which a reading of the novel implied. I have discussed this vocabulary in relation to the abduction motif's association with sexual violence, deception, and theft. In novels and in reviews, the abduction plot is an ordeal to be overcome on the road to marriage and financial security. As we have

---

Seven hundred and fifty copies were printed and five hundred and nine were sold at a loss of £9.19.2, Garside and others, *The English Novel 1770-1829*, 673.

[67] 'ART. XX, Joan: A Novel', *English Review of Literature, Science, Discoveries, Inventions, and Practical Controversies and Contests*, 28 (November, 1796), 479-480 (479).

[68] Ibid.

seen, in novels like Charlotte Smith's *Emmeline*, this is a satirical position but satire is not often found in the lesser known novels that I am discussing here.

Reviews of such novels, however, did satirise violence and sexual aggression. Sometimes as a comic adventure in the vocabulary of the medieval courtly romance involving knights, dragons, and damsels in distress. Such discrepancies in tone between the novel and its review creates a lacuna in the narrative between authorial intention and the expectations of readers who approach the novel having first read the review. For example, the *English Review*'s piece on *The Platonic Guardian; or the History of an Orphan* (1788) is a scathing attack on the lack of imagination of novelists and their improbable and romantic stories. The piece employs satire to reinterpret the abduction scene and condemns the novel as 'formed of hacknied incidents'.[69]

The novel's epistolary form allows a minor degree of interiority to the characters but there is no sustained rendering of a character's personality. It addresses the issue of unequal marriage (where the inequality relates to age rather than fortune) and this theme is carried through to the abduction scene in which the usual gender roles are confused so that the abduction is planned by a woman and carried out by a deceived male. The abduction scene in the novel is particularly violent and the threat of rape made explicit: 'no power on earth shall deter me from the possession of your person, whether you consent to be my lawful wife or not'.[70]

[69] 'ART. 23. The Platonic Guardian; Or, History of an Orphan', *English Review: Or, an Abstract of English and Foreign Literature, 1783-1795*, 11 (January, 1788), 68.
[70] By a Lady, *The Platonic Guardian: or, History of an Orphan*, in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (Dublin: Byrne, Wogan, Colbert and Halpen, 1788), 163.

However, the *English Review* reinterprets the scene as a romantic medieval ordeal that captures the novel's narrative style but trivialises the violence suffered by the heroine:

> A *perfidious lord*, a *damsel* carried off by craft, or by violence, –her relations in despair for their *angel friend*, –her *lover* starting up to deliver her from the claws of the dragon, –and, in conclusion, a happy wedding.

In this section, I have focused on the language associated with the representation of abduction plots in the reception history of novels. I have argued that reviews form a discourse of aggression towards women and that the review process obscures the violence associated with abduction so that the motif's complex and subtle nuances are lost.

Reviews normally identified the abduction plot as involving violence towards women. However, abduction in novels is linked to other contexts. There is also a recognition that the motif depicts violence not only as outright aggression but also as a more insidious act involving deception and that this obscures its violent nature. The frequent reference to the abduction motif in reviews signals it as a literary convention with a shared understanding between writer and reader that references the social and cultural pressures on women. However, this shared understanding can be disrupted by the compression of plots in which the subtle nuances of the abduction plot are lost. The abduction plots of the lesser known novels I have discussed in this section were often criticised as derivative. At least one of these lesser known novels refers back to Richardson's *Clarissa* and the ambiguous nature of Clarissa's flight with Lovelace.[71]

[71] Ruth Perry cites thirteen novels that imitate Clarissa's abduction plot. They 'All tell about an abduction or unwanted sexual encounter between an unprincipled man and an intelligent and

The abduction of Clarissa Harlowe

Richardson's *Clarissa, or The History of a Young Lady* is probably the most famous example of a complex abduction plot in eighteenth-century fiction. In the course of the novel Clarissa is the subject of four abductions, three of which involve the outwardly charming but villainous Lovelace and one by her brother, the repellent James Harlowe.[72] The following discussion considers Albrecht Von Haller's review published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* in June and August 1749. Before doing so, I point to some key critical commentary and then quote the abduction scene itself.

Scholars argue that Richardson deliberately obscures Clarissa's culpability or innocence in her abduction and that this equivocation is central to the narrative. Tom Keymer describes it as this 'troubling unavailability of resolution' that forces readers to make up their own minds.[73] He observes that Clarissa's abduction is central to the plot and that 'The rest of the novel will trace her efforts to atone.'[74] Schwarz makes the relationship between the novel and the principles of contemporary abduction law

articulate woman who has been abandoned one way or another by her natural protectors, the men in her family.' Perry claims that imitation 'crested in the late 1760s and early 1770s' and that: 'By 1792 the period of direct imitation was over', 'Clarissa's Daughters', 124. For a discussion of the links between *Clarissa* and earlier fiction see Margaret Anne Doody, '*Clarissa* and Earlier Novels of Love and Seduction', *A Natural Passion: A Study of the Novels of Samuel Richardson* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), 128-150. Doody relates *Clarissa* to Eliza Haywood's fiction and the 'seduction novel' which 'before Richardson […] was not from a literary point of view a respectable form of fiction', 149. Richardson, as we know, sought to control readers' interpretation of his novels.

[72] Schwarz discusses the legal differences between Lovelace's abduction of Clarissa from Harlowe Place and from Hampstead. She argues that both abductions were statutory felonies and punishable by death, 269. However, there is legal ambiguity in Clarissa's actions during her abduction from Harlowe Place that is not present in her abduction from Hampstead, 296. Ann K. Wagner argues that there is a 'profusion' of legal discourse in *Clarissa* and that Lovelace perpetrates 'multiple criminal acts' that include 'two felonious abductions'. She argues that 'Clarissa's attraction to Lovelace is important. It makes her flight from her parents' house sympathetic rather than simply heedless', 'Sexual Assault in the Shadow of the Law: Character and Proof in Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa*', *Law & Literature*, 25.2 (2013), 311-326 (317).

[73] Keymer, 123.

[74] Ibid, 108.

clear. She argues that Richardson purposefully 'crafted ambiguities' into Clarissa's abduction from Harlowe Place to 'exploit the complexities and subtleties of abduction law and Lovelace's motives and actions'.[75] Schwarz argues that contemporary readers were likely to regard Lovelace's abductions of Clarissa as more dreadful crimes than rape 'because he violated both her virginity and integrity'.[76] She points out that eighteenth-century court procedure assumed that if the defendant was innocent 'he ought to be able to demonstrate it'.[77] Sandra Macpherson argues that Lovelace would be guilty of felony murder because his actions contributed to Clarissa's death.[78] Macpherson substantiates her argument by pointing out that 'The language of constructive intent is everywhere in *Clarissa*.'[79] In this analysis, Lovelace performs criminal acts for which he could be prosecuted and capitally convicted.

Scholars observe that the novel's epistolary form allows the reader freedom to act as judge and jury. Terry Castle observes that the reader's inability to discriminate between the conflicting accounts of the abduction is related to the epistolary form in

[75] Schwarz, 292-293. She points out parallels between two abduction cases from 1701 (Swendsen and Baynton) and *Clarissa*, 292. She concludes that 'Clearly, eighteenth-century Britain's priority with its abduction law was not protection of the woman or her chastity, but rather punishment of the abductor because his stealing an heiress was a "violation of property", a crime which was considered as "a very great offense against the public."', 292.
[76] Schwarz, 298. Wagner contends that acknowledging Clarissa's complicity does not preclude her from arguing her legal case against Lovelace, 317.
[77] Schwarz, 283. She discusses the evidence required by a jury in an abduction case and states that 'in abduction cases of propertied women, the property issue was a necessary but not a sufficient condition; the sufficient condition was an evidentiary issue that turned on whether a woman's departure with the defendant was voluntary', 284.
[78] Sandra Macpherson defines 'felony murder', 'Felony murder sees responsibility as causal rather than intentional and is a mechanism for holding person accountable for things they did not mean to do', *Harm's Way: Tragic Responsibility and the Novel Form* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), 64.
[79] Macpherson, 77. Stone argued that Clarissa elopes with Lovelace and then dies after her rape, 'consumed by guilt', *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1977; abridged and rev. ed., 1979), 188.

which there is no 'guidance' so that the reader 'must mediate between irreconcilables, channel an overflow of interpretative possibilities'.[80] She argues that Clarissa's abduction 'baffles' the reader 'not because it is an intrinsically inexplicable event, but because it seems to have too *many* explanations'.[81] The epistolary form, therefore, adds to the complexity of the abduction plot as the reader must pay close attention to the dates of the letters in order to be clear about Lovelace's duplicity and Clarissa's ignorance of his intentions.

Castle points out that the accounts given by Clarissa and Lovelace 'make for the most perplexing dichotomy'.[82] Clarissa's explanation to Anna that 'she "went off" because she feared the renewed terrorism of her relations' adds to the reader's confusion.[83] Lois Bueler suggests that Richardson was attempting to reconcile opposing goals. He wanted 'his readers to take on completely and directly the act of interpretation, so long as their interpretation shall correspond with his'.[84]

The contemporary controversy that surrounded the portrayal of an exemplary heroine's flight with an immoral aristocrat remains a current literary discussion. Scholars continue to argue about the motivation for the abduction plot. Kinkead-Weekes argued that Clarissa's flight was 'entirely against her will'.[85] Lovelace frightened Clarissa into leaving with him: 'Lovelace will manage to "abduct" her

[80] Terry Castle, *Clarissa's Ciphers: Meaning and Disruption in Richardson's "Clarissa"* (London: Cornell University Press, 1982), 166.
[81] Castle, *Clarissa's Ciphers*, 166. Lois Bueler also makes this point in *Clarissa's Plots*, (Newark: University of Delaware Press and London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1994), 149-154.
[82] Castle, *Clarissa's Ciphers*, 166.
[83] Ibid.
[84] Bueler, *Clarissa's Plots*, 149.
[85] Kinkead-Weekes, 174.

through pure fright, when she had determined not to go.'[86] William Warner argues that Clarissa's abduction 'is not a gratuitous or accidental event, nor is it simply imposed by force'.[87] Warner argues that Clarissa interprets the event in religious terms as 'the fall from God's grace'.[88] She 'takes responsibility for it, by accepting it as a sinful moment in her own history'.[89] Florian Stuber pointed to the supernatural elements of the scene. Clarissa's abduction leads her into a 'spooky place' where she is surrounded by Gothic motifs.[90] More recently, Karen Lipsedge suggests that Lovelace interprets Clarissa's agreement to unbolt the garden door as tantamount to her complicity: 'By agreeing to unbolt the back door, and give Lovelace access to her ivy summer-house, and the Harlowes' estate, she has unknowingly demonstrated her willingness to depart with him.'[91] Bowers offers an allegorical reading of Clarissa's 'murky elopement/abduction' by relating it to the 'ambiguous abdication/usurpation of 1688-89'.[92] She argues that 'Resistance can take a variety of forms, including what may look like complicity; virtue may reside even in error and collusion, even, indeed, in scandalous resistance.'[93] Figures 16 and 17 illustrate the elopement/abduction debate. Figure 16 depicts Clarissa's fear of her family and supports the argument that she eloped with Lovelace. Clarissa looks back

[86] Ibid, 164.
[87] William B. Warner, *Reading "Clarissa": The Struggles of Interpretation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), 71.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Florian Stuber, 'Clarissa: A Religious Novel?', *Studies in the Literary Imagination*, 28.1 (1995), 105-124 (107).
[91] Karen Lipsedge, 'A Place of Refuge, Seduction or Danger? The Representation of the Ivy Summerhouse in Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa*', *Journal of Design History*, 19.3 (2006), 185-196 (193).
[92] Bowers, 276.
[93] Ibid, 275.

Figure 16: Scene from Clarissa, or, the History of a Young Lady: the Elopement.[94]

[94] John Zoffany (1733-1810) Digital Project: Artstor ImageID: W7284. © 1998-2017 The Frick Collection.

Figure 17: Clarissa Harlow (1795)[95]

[95] @ Trustees of the British Museum. Registration number 1872,1012.578.

apprehensively towards the garden gate where Joseph is making sufficient noise to persuade her that her family is rushing towards her. Lovelace has placed a protective arm around Clarissa's shoulders and is looking directly at her with sympathy and concern. His sword remains sheathed. He stands in front of Clarissa and appears to be guiding her towards safety. However, in figure 17 their positions are reversed. Lovelace stands behind Clarissa and has drawn his sword. He is urging her forward. He is pointing to his coach where two more men are waiting for her. Lovelace is portrayed as muscular and physically dominant. His flowing cloak denotes movement and the position of his hand over Clarissa's body suggests urgency and familiarity. Clarissa looks back towards Lovelace with fear and alarm rather than back towards the garden gate.

Scholars also argue that Clarissa's narrative of abduction and confinement develops as captivity and victimisation affect her judgement of Lovelace's character. For example, Terry Eagleton questions Clarissa's ability to judge Lovelace's actions in terms of social theory. Once abducted and confined, Clarissa discovers that 'truth and justice' cannot be 'so easily disengaged from the power interests and social relations which frame them'.[96] Scholars today continue to debate Clarissa's abduction and cite eighteenth-century law, the epistolary format, and evidence from the novel, to support their arguments.

[96] Terry Eagleton, *Rape of Clarissa: Writing, Sexuality and Class Struggle in Samuel Richardson* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1982), 81-82. Helen M. Ostovich argues that Richardson had an 'intuitive grasp' of the psychological damage caused by prolonged imprisonment and confinement and this is portrayed in Clarissa's diminished ability to 'judge and act', '"Our Views Must Now Be Different": Imprisonment and Friendship in Clarissa', *Modern Language Quarterly*, 52.2 (1991), 153-169 (153). Judy Cornett argues that Clarissa is deceived by what she sees and hears because her judgement is impaired as a result of her inexperience, 'The Treachery of Perception: Evidence and Experience in Clarissa', *University of Cincinnati Law Review*, 63 (1994-1995), 165-194.

Flight, Fear or Fantasy: Clarissa and Lovelace

Clarissa described her flight from Harlowe Place as 'the rashest thing that ever I did in my life!'[97] The episode is attended by both verbal and physical aggression:

> A panic, next to fainting seized me when I saw him. My heart seemed convulsed; and I trembled so, that I should hardly have kept my feet had he not supported me.
>
> […]
>
> Let us hasten away!—The chariot is at hand! […]
>
> Recovering my spirits a little, as he kept drawing me after him […] I cannot go with you!—*Indeed* I cannot! […]
>
> Speed away, my charmer!—this is the moment of your deliverance!—If you neglect this opportunity, you *never* can have such another! […]
>
> "Let go my hand: for I tell you (struggling vehemently) that I will sooner die than go with you! Good God, said he! With a look of wildness and surprise, what is it I hear!—but (still drawing me after him as he retreated farther from the door) it is no time to argue […]
>
> Am I to be thus compelled? (374)
>
> […]
>
> Thus terrified, I was got out of sight of the door in a very few minutes: and then, although quite breathless between running and apprehension, he put my arm under his, his drawn sword in the other, and hurried me on still faster: my voice, however, contradicting my action; crying No, no, no, all the while, straining my neck to look back as long as the walls of the garden and park were within sight, and till he brought me to his uncle's chariot: where attending were two armed servants of his own, and two of Lord M.'s on horseback. (380)

Lovelace draws his sword, takes Clarissa's arm, and leads her onwards despite her cries of resistance. Clarissa vocalises her unwillingness to leave but is physically unable to resist Lovelace's forceful actions. In addition, her confinement and

[97] Samuel Richardson, *Clarissa or The History of a Young Lady* (1747-48), ed. by Angus Ross (London: Penguin Books, 1985; reissued 2004), 337. Further references are given after quotations in the text.

isolation at Harlowe Place has left her reluctant to trust her family. At the carriage, she is faced with four more men, two of whom are also armed, so that she is surrounded by five men at least three of whom have drawn their swords. These armed men signify both protection from that which she flees and aggression to ensure her compliance.

Reading for the abduction plot emphasises the complexity of Richardson's narrative. The intention that Lovelace will force Clarissa to leave, whether she consents or not, is information that is not immediately available to Clarissa or to the reader. The reader is informed after the abduction that Lovelace planned to 'prevail upon her, no doubt, if loath before, to fly' and that she will be so ''frighted, there is no question but she will fly' (384). Furthermore, her family will believe her flight is consensual: 'that, as I have ordered it, the flight will appear to the implacables to be altogether with her own consent' (387). Lovelace's vocabulary, 'prevail', 'frighted', 'flight' is a lexicon of coercion.

Clarissa's language changes as Lovelace's deception is revealed to her. Her initial exclamation to Anna that she has 'gone off with a man!' (370) becomes 'cheated', 'tricked' 'seduced', 'spirit[ed] away', 'betrayed' and 'prevail[ed] upon'. She is '*cheated* hither' (393); 'tricked away as I was by him, not only against my judgement, but my inclination' (410); 'had I not been unhappily seduced away' (567); 'my guilt in giving this man an opportunity to spirit me away' (823), and he 'at first betrayed me into his power' (825). Clarissa's language is a lexicon of deception.

Anna Howe's equivocal expressions of support illustrate the perception that 'abduction' could be a euphemism for a sexual adventure. Castle, for example, argues that Anna's reading of Clarissa's feelings for Lovelace is 'utterly compromising'.[98] She suggests that Anna is attracted to Lovelace and that her letters impose this desire on to Clarissa who 'begins to act out her friend's fantasy'.[99] I suggest that we can see Anna's ambivalence towards the relationship between Clarissa and Lovelace in the language she uses to assure Clarissa that she did the right thing when she left Harlowe Place: 'Did you not do for the best at the time?' (403). Anna's reassurance is formed as a question and is not an unqualified statement of support. Although Anna is adamant that Clarissa was 'driven' by her family she is less confident about Lovelace's motivation, 'You were driven on one side, and possibly tricked on the other' (405). Here, Anna gives Lovelace the benefit of the doubt. Anna also suggests that the conventional excuses for Clarissa's 'flight' (405) would not be believed by their peers. She points out that the family 'believe you went off by your own consent' (407) and that a 'censuring world' (407) would have trouble believing that Clarissa was the victim of deception and 'did not intend' to leave with Lovelace, 'was over-persuaded' or 'tricked out' (407) of herself. Anna draws attention to Clarissa's fear that her actions will be misconstrued and her reputation compromised by comparing Clarissa's actions with 'giddy' women with no 'decorum' who would 'leap' or 'steal' away:

> If YOU think yourself inexcusable for taking a step that put you into the way of delusion, without any intention to go off with him, what must those giddy

[98] Castle, *Clarissa's Ciphers*, 77. In the letter that Lovelace intercepts, Anna makes clear that she believes Clarissa to be in love with Lovelace: '*Alas, my dear, I knew you loved him!*, 750.
[99] Castle, *Clarissa's Ciphers*, 78.

> creatures think of themselves, who, without half your provocations and inducements, and without any regard to decorum, leap walls, drop from windows, and steal away from their parents' house to the seducer's bed, in the same day? (577)

My point here is that Anna questions the degree of Clarissa's culpability, rather than making a binary distinction between abduction (force) and elopement (consent).

Richardson's abridged version of *Clarissa* in *The Paths of Virtue* (1756) smooths out this coercion/complicity/deception complexity by exposing the social expectations that Clarissa has transgressed:

> that she should for ever blame herself for meeting him, and him for taking ungenerous advantages of her youth and inexperience […]. He endeavoured to clear himself of the charge of having dealt artfully with her, by saying that he came by her confirmed appointment.[100]

The Paths of Virtue is written in third person summary with occasional first person dialogue and so lacks the intimacy of the first person letters of the original. The distancing effect of the third person narrator exposes the framework of the plot and dispenses with the subtleties of the abduction/elopement ambiguity. It makes clear that Clarissa is forced to leave by the machinations of her relatives and the devious schemes of Lovelace:

> Thus was the beautiful and accomplished *Clarissa*, who had till lately been the delight and the boast of her relations, the admiration of all who knew her, and had been justly admired as a pattern of virtue and prudence, forced by those very relations, and the specious arts of the designing *Lovelace*, into his protection; into the protection of a rake of abandoned principles.[101]

---

[100] Samuel Richardson, *The Paths of Virtue Delineated* (1756), 'Richardsoniana XIV' (New York: Garland Publishing, 1974), 29-134 (56). *The Paths of Virtue* was published anonymously. James Raven records it as being authored by Samuel Richardson, *British Fiction 1750-1770*, 130. Katherine Binhammer compares *Clarissa* to the abridged version, *The Seduction Narrative in Britian1747-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 25.
[101] *The Paths of Virtue Delineated*, 55.

The first published comment on the novel highlighted the difficulties that contemporary readers found in interpreting Clarissa's actions.[102] It appeared in January 1748 in Henry Fielding's *Jacobite's Journal* after the publication of the first two volumes (the second volume ends with Clarissa's abduction). The piece emphasised the opposing narratives that are central to the ambiguity of the abduction scene:[103]

> Clarissa is undutiful; she is too dutiful. She is too cold; she is too fond. She uses her father, mother, uncles, brother, sister, lover, friend, too ill, too well. In short, there is scarce a contradiction in character, which I have not heard assigned from different Reasons to this poor girl; who is as much the object of compassion as she can be, and as good as she should be described.[104]

A translation of Albrect von Haller's review appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine* in June and August 1749 along with 'ANSWERS to the OBJECTIONS'.[105] Keymer states that these annotations can 'safely be attributed to

---

[102] Sarah Fielding also debated Clarissa's culpability for her flight with Lovelace, *Remarks on Clarissa (1749)*, The Augustan Reprint Society 231-232 (Pasadena, California: Castle Press, 1985), 16-18.

[103] Richardson's published correspondence illustrates the debate that *Clarissa* engendered. For example, his letter to Aaron Hill in which he complains that Clarissa's abduction had been misunderstood, letter of 26 January 1747, *Samuel Richardson: Correspondence with Aaron Hill and the Hill Family*, ed. by Christine Gerrard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 243-249 (246-249), and Richardson's letter to Sarah Chapone in which he discusses Clarissa's culpability, 2 March 1752, John Carroll, ed., *Selected Letters of Samuel Richardson* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), 201.

[104] Henry Fielding, Letter to "Mr Trott", the Editor, unsigned, *The Jacobite's Journal*, 5 (2 January 1748) quoted in *Clarissa: The Eighteenth-Century Response 1747-1804*, vol I, 'Reading Clarissa', ed. by Lois E. Bueler, AMS Studies in the Eighteenth Century: The Clarissa Project, 10 vols (New York: AMS Press, 2010), 7-8 (8).

[105] The review was originally published in the *Bibliothéque raisonné des Ouvrages des Savants de l'Europe* before being anonymously translated for the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Tom Keymer notes some variations in the translation from its original including an added phrase which Keymer argues has the effect of 'weakening Haller's implied allegation of rashness'. The phrase is 'daughters against trusting themselves with a lover, whom they know to be a libertine, whatever his profession and their distress', 'Albert von Haller's review of *Clarissa* with Richardson's annotations, *Gentleman's Magazine*, 19, June and August 1749', *Samuel Richardson's Published Commentary on "Clarissa"*

Richardson'.[106] Richardson endorsed Haller's review, calling him this 'ingenious and candid Foreigner'.[107] Haller's piece questioned the probability of the abduction plot and added to the issues that the reader was already grappling with by its compression and simplification of the plot into a discourse of aggression. Haller suggested that Clarissa's abduction required explanation: was Clarissa coerced into being abducted or did she leave willingly and did Lovelace care about the criminality of his actions?

Haller argued that the plot was socially realistic because the heroine was 'in the same station of life' as her readers (August, 346) unlike works where plots 'bear no proportion' to any 'misfortunes' that may happen to the reader (August, 347). Indeed, *Clarissa*'s relationship to lived experience is an argument developed by scholars today.[108] Morris Golden argued that the plot had its basis in the historical record and pointed to news items that may have influenced Richardson 'perhaps not as direct sources but as fragments of the time, mnemonic devices for writer and readers'.[109]

Haller praised the pace of the narrative: 'The reader is allowed no interval of rest; but urged on from one event to another, his curiosity is perpetually both excited

1747-65, ed. by Tom Keymer, 3 vols (London: Pickering & Chatto, 1998), I:140-145 (144)). References are to the original reviews published in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, 'A Critical ACCOUNT of CLARISSA in 7 Volumes. Translated from the French', *The Gentleman's Magazine: And Historical Chronicle, Jan.1736-Dec.1833*, 19 (June, 1749), 245-246 and (August, 1749), 345-349. The many other responses are available in Bueler, *Clarissa: The Eighteenth-Century Response 1747-1804*, vol I.

[106] 'Albert von Haller's review of *Clarissa*', *Samuel Richardson's Published Commentary on "Clarissa" 1747-65*, 140.

[107] 'Postscript', *Samuel Richardson's Published Commentary on "Clarissa"*, I:253-275 (271). This is Richardson's preface to the third edition.

[108] The novel is set about twenty years in the past in the years 1721, 1727 or 1732, T.C. Duncan Eaves and Ben D. Kimpel, *Samuel Richardson: A Biography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 239.

[109] Morris Golden, 'Public Context and Imagining Self in Clarissa', *Studies in English Literature*, 25.3 (1985), 575-598 (577).

and gratified' (June, 246).[110] Haller foregrounded the novel's violent acts and compressed the plot to a rapid succession of events that compels the reader to keep reading.[111] Furthermore, Haller's review focalised the debate over whether Clarissa was culpable for her abduction:

> she is led to give *Lovelace* a private meeting, which, by a new artifice, he causes to terminate in her going off with him, almost in spight of herself; an event which overwhelms her with doubts and terrors, very natural to a young lady in such circumstances. (August, 345)

Haller's implied suggestion that Clarissa was culpable for her abduction reflects Anna Howe's vocabulary of scepticism at Clarissa's motivation for leaving with Lovelace.

Ian Watt argued that the novel's epistolary form obscures the full force of Lovelace's manipulation until after his abduction of Clarissa: 'It is only when [Clarissa's and Anna's] characters and backgrounds have been fully established and Clarissa has taken the fateful step […] that the main male correspondence begins and at once reveals the full danger of Clarissa's situation.'[112] John Preston pointed out that the epistolary form allowed the reader to know only that which the characters' write and that anything else is 'not only unknown' but 'non-existent'.[113] So, when Clarissa flees with Lovelace she does not recognise that she is being abducted and

[110] Watt argued that the slowness of the narrative 'communicates a sense of continual tension' and the tempo suggests a 'calm surface of repressive convention and ingrown hypocrisy' that is 'momentarily' interrupted by 'secret violences', 211.
[111] The various events are: two duels; a hated arranged marriage; a forced flight; confinement in a brothel; fire-setting; escape and recapture; rape when drugged with opium; threatened suicide; false imprisonment; illness, and death. Records on the borrowing patterns of *Clarissa* indicate that it was not read as a complete novel. Fergus's research show that it was borrowed in 'ten truncated readings' and was borrowed 'less often' than *Grandison*, Fergus, 111.
[112] Watt, 210.
[113] John Preston, *The Created Self: The Reader's Role in Eighteenth-Century Fiction* (London: Heinemann, 1970), 46.

nor does the reader. Haller implied that the difference between Clarissa's abduction from Harlowe Place and from Hampshire is Clarissa's awareness of Lovelace's perfidy. However, Haller's contemporary, Jane Collier, took issue with his commentary on Clarissa's culpability. She accused Haller of 'strange Inattention' to the text in his comment that Clarissa '*suffered herself* to be carried off!'[114] Collier describes Clarissa's predicament as caught between two impossible choices. She cites Shakespeare and King Lear to make her point: 'Her going off was in truth no more Voluntary' than King Lear's choice between a bear and a 'roaring sea'.[115]

Haller's use of 'artifice' suggests that Clarissa's flight is an act of compulsion as a result of her inability to recognise that she is being deceived. However, this interpretation can only be made once the reader has read further than volume two. Thus, the four-month hiatus between the publication of the second and third volumes provides the space for readers to form their own opinions independent of authorial intention. Furthermore, the review used terms such as 'going off' and 'carry off' that, as we have seen, were not necessarily associated by contemporaries with violent abduction.

Haller's piece is important because it demonstrates that the very first critical commentary on the novel highlighted the ambiguity of the titular heroine's abduction from Harlowe Place and the possibility that Clarissa could be considered culpable. Haller suggested that Clarissa's actions were one of the novel's 'faults': 'she shows too scrupulous a delicacy after she has suffered herself to be carry'd off by Lovelace'

[114] Quoted in 'Albert von Haller's review of *Clarissa* with Richardson's annotations', *Samuel Richardson's Published Commentary on Clarissa*, I:142.
[115] Ibid.

(August, 348). He suggested that these 'faults' were her correspondence with Lovelace and her assignation with him at the garden gate, both of which implied culpability. Haller's condemnation of Clarissa's actions was harsh, 'A lady who has once put herself into the power of her lover, is no longer to affect distance, or expect the punctilio's of courtship should be observed' (August, 348).[116]

Richardson's annotations dispute Haller's interpretation and suggest that Clarissa was only guilty of naivety because Lovelace gave her 'no reason to apprehend any ill consequences from these assignations' (August, 347). He reinforced Clarissa's naivety in his anthology, *Moral and Instructive Sentiments* (1755) in which he indexed Clarissa's abduction under 'Modesty Audacity' and stated, 'A modest lady, who throws herself into the power of a Rake, is very unequal to the adventure'.[117]

Haller suggested that the Harlowe Place abduction scene lacked probability. He praised the novel for its depiction of social actuality but cast doubt on Clarissa's abduction by suggesting that Lovelace's social status as an aristocrat would have made him wary of challenging the extremely wealthy Harlowe family:

> It is even a doubt with me, whether probability is preserved in the detestable audacity of *Lovelace*; to carry a lady of quality to a brothel, to confine her a captive there against her will, to give her opium, and to violate her person. Is this possible in a country so jealous of its laws and liberty? Can it be thought that *Lovelace,* who was not deficient in understanding, and who expected to be a peer of the realm, would expose himself to the persecution of a powerful

[116] Warner argues that 'the critic of the *Gentleman's Magazine* essay wants a flawless heroine, so Clarissa is criticised by him for disobedience to her father, disrespect to Solmes, and running off with Lovelace', *Reading "Clarissa"*, 141.
[117] *Samuel Richardson's Published Commentary on Clarissa*, III:163. Johnson included quotes from this collection in his dictionary, see W. R. Keast, 'The Two *Clarissas* in Johnson's *Dictionary*', *Studies in Philology*, 54, 3 (July, 1957), 429-39. Reference to this article is in Bueler, *The Eighteenth-Century Response*, 211-212.

> family, exasperated against him, beyond the possibility of reconciliation? (August, 348)

Richardson's response was to defend Lovelace's casual approach to criminality as true to normal aristocratic behaviour: Lovelace 'defied the laws of his country, as too many of his cast do' (August, 349).[118]

Haller's review singles out the abduction scene for comment and suggests that it lacked probability and verisimilitude. The heroine cannot be exemplary given her culpability for her abduction from Harlowe Place from which all her subsequent troubles flow. Today, Schwarz argues that Clarissa's behaviour may well mean that she would have lost a prosecution against Lovelace for abduction, 'Given these compromising acts, Clarissa probably would not prevail by trying to prove Lovelace's deceitful contrivances to take her away from Harlowe Place because she has compromised and complicated her case with her own behaviour.'[119] Thus Clarissa could have been declared complicit by the courts and her reputation ruined. In addition, Schwarz argues that Lovelace 'probably would have been pardoned' even if the Harlowes had successfully prosecuted.[120] So, the law provides no comfort to Clarissa. She might have been found at least partly responsible for her predicament and Lovelace pardoned because of his social rank. Clarissa may have

[118] Jocelyn Harris argues that the character of Lovelace is based on that of John Wilmot, second Earl of Rochester (1647-1680), who was an acknowledged libertine and who abducted his future wife, 'Protean Lovelace', in *Passion and Virtue: Essay on the Novels of Samuel Richardson*, ed. by David Blewett (London: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 92-113.
[119] Schwarz, 295.
[120] Ibid, 299.

been condemned by her peers as ruined and her family suffered social ostracism, given Lovelace's influence and aristocratic lineage.[121]

Other reviews on publication of *Clarissa* (in translation) offer opposing opinions of Clarissa's culpability. Another review by Haller confirms his view that Clarissa was culpable, 'The story is so linked to the weakness of a young woman who lets herself be abducted by a free-thinking and free-living youth' that there is 'little doubt as to the probability of the outcome'.[122] However, Abbé Joseph de la Porte suggested that Clarissa was deceived into fleeing with Lovelace, 'she went off with Lovelace' but only because she was deceived by his 'tricks':

> She resisted all their solicitations with firmness, but from fear that violent means would be used, she went off with Lovelace who, by the kinds of tricks he knew so well how to use, was at last able to extract his mistress from her father's house.[123]

Haller's review highlights the contemporary debate that *Clarissa* provoked: could a modest woman be culpable for a sexual intrigue or would her innocence only make her vulnerable to deception? Keymer points out that Richardson is deliberately 'equivocal' and leaves the question of Clarissa's culpability to the reader by giving 'the fullest range of conceivable responses and answers'.[124] Abduction in *Clarissa* is

[121] Thomas O. Beebee suggests that Lovelace thinks about the consequences of his abduction and rape of Clarissa and how to avoid the law, 'Doing Clarissa's will: Samuel Richardson's legal genres', *International Journal Semiot Law*, 2.2 (June, 1989), 159-182 (169).
[122] Quoted in Bueler, *The Eighteenth-Century Response*, 17-18 (17).
[123] Quoted in Bueler *The Eighteenth-Century Response*, 68-72 (71). This review was published in 1752. Abbé Antoine François Prévost translated *Clarissa* and in his introduction stated that he had 'changed or suppressed' some of Richardson's narrative, Bueler, *The Eighteenth-Century Response*, 67-68 (67). Eaves and Kempel suggest that Richardson was 'embarrassed' about Prévost and was not pleased with the alterations he made, 415.
[124] Keymer, 123.

an extreme example of the ambiguous nature of the term and the contemporary confusion about what constituted abduction as a crime.

Chapter Four: Abduction and domestic fiction: a lesson in modesty

The cultural attitude that women are responsible for inciting sexual passion in men is a recurring plot in eighteen-century domestic fiction.[1] In this chapter, I argue that domestic fiction encouraged the perception of abduction as an invisible crime by condoning the concept of female culpability. As we know, 'Realist texts frequently use narrative repetition to challenge simplistic views of reality' such as telling a tale from a different viewpoint.[2] This implies that truth is not stable but is shifting and multiple. In this chapter, I continue my argument that abduction in eighteenth-century fiction is a fluid category that resists stable definition. I consider abduction narratives in which 'abduction' shades into specific legal categories, such as rape, and which is perceived by contemporaries to be a blurred and euphemistic term that is easily elided with elopement.

Each abduction narrative discussed in this chapter illustrates the consequences of women taking active roles in decisions about their lives in very different ways. I argue that the abduction narratives in Eliza Haywood's *The Female Spectator* (1744-46) and Samuel Richardson's abduction plot in *The History of Sir Charles Grandison* (1753-54) suggest that women take defective decisions when left to make their own choices.[3] These narratives affirm the benefits of patriarchy to

[1] As already noted, by 'domestic fiction' I mean fiction that is recognisable as a mimetic representation of contemporary social life.
[2] Pam Morris, *Realism*, (London: Routledge, 2003), 109.
[3] The story of Erminia can be found in the *Selected Works of Eliza Haywood*, ed. by Kathryn R. King and Alexander Pettit, 3 vols (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2001), set II, vol. 2:40-45; Samuel Richardson, *The History of Sir Charles Grandison* (1753-54), ed. by Jocelyn Harris, 3 vols (London: Oxford University Press, 1972). Further references are given after quotations in the text. For general information about *The Female Spectator* see Lynn Marie Wright and Donald J. Newman's introduction to their collection of essays, *Fair Philosopher: Eliza Haywood and "The Female*

women. I then suggest that Sarah Fielding's novel, *The History of Ophelia* (1760), offers a contrast to this defective decision-making.[4] I show that the titular heroine's abduction ordeal challenges the idea of female culpability. I argue that the abduction scenes question the ideology that orders society through male hegemony and female subjugation and I suggest that Fielding's novel looks ahead to a new narrative for gender relations.

Succumbing to abduction: *The Female Spectator* (1744-46)

Erminia's story in the first book of *The Female Spectator* is a brutal abduction tale. It narrates the sexual danger represented by public masquerades and suggests that women who attend them endanger themselves. It draws attention to the immorality of a society in which youthfulness and gaucherie are excuses for ridicule and violence. This complex story is narrated by a female voice and sits within contemporary ideology that condones the subordination of women. The story implies that women are collusive in the cultural attitude that abduction is an avoidable hazard. It teaches that if women would only 'Guard' their behaviour and not 'run wilfully, and in Defiance […] of all Temptations' then they would not 'set an ill Precedent for others' (45).

Spectator" (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2006), 13-41. Patrick Spedding identifies *The Female Spectator* as Haywood's most popular work, *A Bibliography of Eliza Haywood* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2004), 775. Leah Orr questions the attribution of *The Female Spectator* to Eliza Haywood in 'The Basis for Attribution in the Canon of Eliza Haywood', *The Library: The Transactions of the Bibliographical Society*, 12.4 (December 2011), 335-361. However, King states that there is 'little doubt' that Haywood authored *The Female Spectator* but she may not have been the sole author, *A Political Biography of Eliza Haywood* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2012), 114.

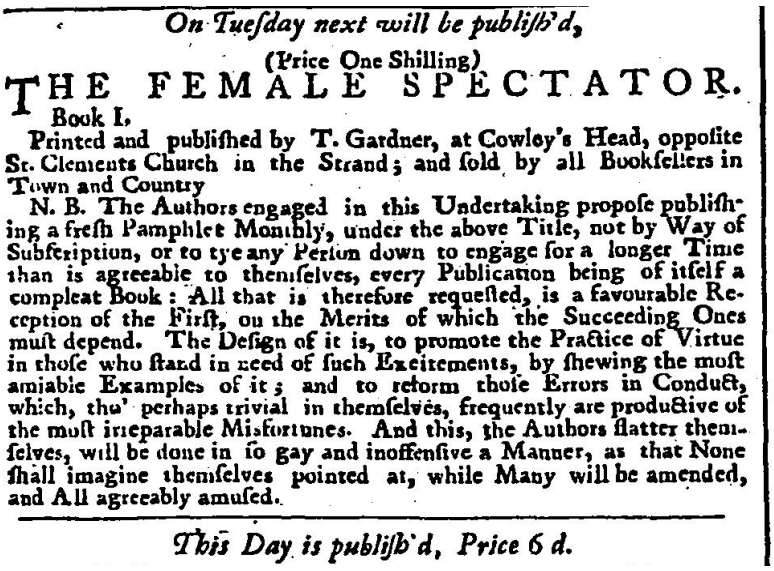
[4] Sarah Fielding, *The History of Ophelia* (1760), ed. by Peter Sabor (Ontario: Broadview Press, 2004). Further references are given after quotations in the text.

Kathryn R. King describes *The Female Spectator* as an 'intensely topical' work 'rooted in the specificities of time and place', thus suggesting that its stories are based on contemporary lived experience.[5] This is confirmed by the introduction to the first story in Book I which states that the periodical's purpose is, 'to reform the Faulty, and give an innocent Amusement to those who are not so' and claims that the stories are based on true life, 'bring real Facts on the stage'.[6] King observes that many scholars suggest that Haywood 'stayed clear of gossip and scandal' in her periodical.[7] Scholars assume that the 'secret histories' that comprise each issue are 'Haywoodian inventions' but King argues that 'it is at least possible that the immense success of *The Female Spectator* in its own time was more indebted to contemporary scandal, or at least to gossip, than has been suspected'.[8] From our historical distance, we cannot be sure whether Erminia's story is a fictionalised true-life account or a familiar history. However, Castle observes that, 'For all the lubriciousness of such stories, one may assume that the sexual violence encoded in them had its basis in fact.'[9]

The advertisement for *The Female Spectator* stated its purpose as 'to promote the Practice of Virtue in those who stand in need of such Excitements' (see figure 18). The periodical is an eclectic mix of moral advice and political and social

[5] *Selected Works of Eliza Haywood*, II:2:vii.
[6] Ibid, II:2:20.
[7] Ibid, II:2:viii; King claims that it was 'a commercial entity […] and intended to make money for its owner or shareholders', *A Political Biography of Eliza Haywood*, 117.
[8] *Selected Works of Eliza Haywood*, II:2:viii.
[9] Terry Castle, *Masquerade and Civilization: The Carnivalesque in Eighteenth Century English Culture and Fiction* (London: Methuen, 1986), 45.

commentary.[10] Jennie Batchelor argues that it brought women 'into contact with the dissipated, scandalous world of rakes, masquerades, and pleasure gardens' but that these 'scandalous narratives are superficially contained' within the periodical's moral framework.[11] King presumes a wide and intellectual audience.[12] Wright and Newman suggest that its 'primary audience' was the upper class woman but that it was also aimed at a 'series of secondary audiences' including men who read periodicals as a 'communal activity'.[13] The collected edition of 1751 was clearly aimed at a specific audience: 'the younger and politer Sort of Ladies' (see figures 18, 19 and 20).



On Tueſday next will be publiſh'd,

(Price One Shilling)

THE FEMALE SPECTATOR.

Book I.

Printed and publiſhed by T. Gardner, at Cowley's Head, oppoſite St. Clements Church in the Strand; and ſold by all Bookſellers in Town and Country

N. B. The Authors engaged in this Undertaking propoſe publiſhing a freſh Pamphlet Monthly, under the above Title, not by Way of Subſcription, or to tye any Perſon down to engage for a longer Time than is agreeable to themſelves, every Publication being of itſelf a compleat Book: All that is therefore requeſted, is a favourable Reception of the Firſt, on the Merits of which the Succeeding Ones muſt depend. The Deſign of it is, to promote the Practice of Virtue in thoſe who ſtand in need of ſuch Excitements, by ſhewing the moſt amiable Examples of it; and to reform thoſe Errors in Conduct, which, tho' perhaps trivial in themſelves, frequently are productive of the moſt inſeparable Misfortunes. And this, the Authors flatter themſelves, will be done in ſo gay and inoffenſive a Manner, as that None ſhall imagine themſelves pointed at, while Many will be amended, and All agreeably amuſed.

This Day is publiſh'd, Price 6 d.

Figure 18: *Old England or The Constitutional Journal*, 21 April 1744, 'Classified ads', 3.[14]

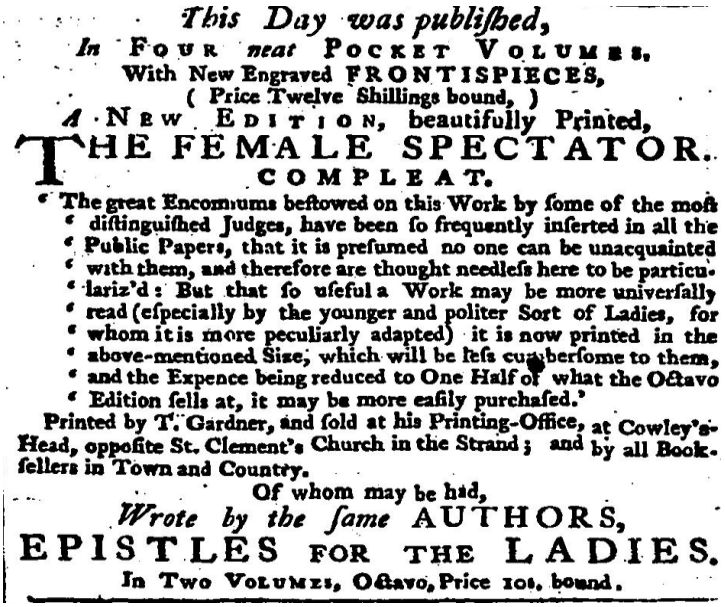
[10] Barbara Benedict points out that eighteenth-century periodicals were 'episodic' which allowed readers to 'ingest reading matter rapidly, perhaps rather than profoundly', a type of reading that Austen satirized in *Northanger Abbey*, 'Jane Austen and the Culture of Circulating Libraries: The Construction of Female Literacy', in *Revising Women*, 147-199 (170).

[11] Jennie Batchelor, *Dress, Distress and Desire: Clothing and the Female Body in Eighteenth-Century Literature* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005), 91.

[12] See *Selected Works of Eliza Haywood*, II:2:5-6 on the wide range of topics discussed in *The Female Spectator*. For a discussion about the audience for eighteenth-century magazines, including *The Female Spectator*, see *Women's World: Ideology, Femininity and the Woman's Magazine*, ed. by Ros Ballaster and others (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1991), 43-61.

[13] Wright and Newman, 17.

[14] Gale Document Number: Z2000988543. © Copyright Cengage Learning.



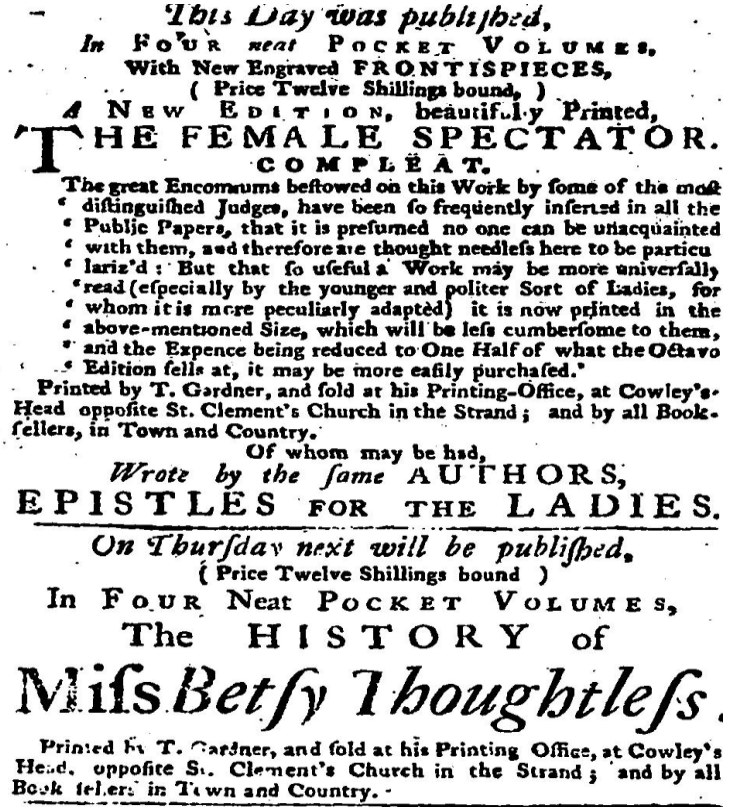
This Day was publiſhed,
In FOUR *neat* POCKET VOLUMES,
With New Engraved FRONTISPIECES,
(Price Twelve Shillings bound,)
A NEW EDITION, beautifully Printed,
THE FEMALE SPECTATOR.
COMPLEAT.

'The great Encomiums beſtowed on this Work by ſome of the moſt 'diſtinguiſhed Judges, have been ſo frequently inſerted in all the 'Public Papers, that it is preſumed no one can be unacquainted 'with them, and therefore are thought needleſs here to be particu-'lariz'd: But that ſo uſeful a Work may be more univerſally 'read (eſpecially by the younger and politer Sort of Ladies, for 'whom it is more peculiarly adapted) it is now printed in the 'above-mentioned Size, which will be leſs cumberſome to them, 'and the Expence being reduced to One Half of what the Octavo 'Edition ſells at, it may be more eaſily purchaſed.'

Printed by T. Gardner, and ſold at his Printing-Office, at Cowley's-Head, oppoſite St. Clement's Church in the Strand; and by all Book-ſellers in Town and Country.

Of whom may be had,
Wrote by the ſame AUTHORS,
EPISTLES FOR THE LADIES.
In Two VOLUMES, Octavo, Price 10s. bound.

Figure 19 *Whitehall Evening Post or London Intelligencer* 19–22 January 1751 'Classified ads.', 3.[15]



This Day was publiſhed,
In FOUR *neat* POCKET VOLUMES,
With New Engraved FRONTISPIECES,
(Price Twelve Shillings bound,)
A NEW EDITION, beautifully Printed,
THE FEMALE SPECTATOR.
COMPLEAT.

The great Encomiums beſtowed on this Work by ſome of the moſt 'diſtinguiſhed Judges, have been ſo frequently inſerted in all the 'Public Papers, that it is preſumed no one can be unacquainted 'with them, and therefore are thought needleſs here to be particu-'lariz'd: But that ſo uſeful a Work may be more univerſally 'read (eſpecially by the younger and politer Sort of Ladies, for 'whom it is more peculiarly adapted) it is now printed in the 'above-mentioned Size, which will be leſs cumberſome to them, 'and the Expence being reduced to One Half of what the Octavo 'Edition ſells at, it may be more eaſily purchaſed.'

Printed by T. Gardner, and ſold at his Printing-Office, at Cowley's-Head oppoſite St. Clement's Church in the Strand; and by all Book-ſellers, in Town and Country.

Of whom may be had,
Wrote by the ſame AUTHORS,
EPISTLES FOR THE LADIES.

On Thurſday next will be publiſhed,
(Price Twelve Shillings bound)
In FOUR Neat POCKET VOLUMES,
The HISTORY of
Miſs *Betſy Thoughtleſs*.

Printed by T. Gardner, and ſold at his Printing Office, at Cowley's Head, oppoſite St. Clement's Church in the Strand; and by all Book ſellers in Town and Country.

Figure 20 *Whitehall Evening Post or London Intelligencer* 19-22 October 1751 'Classified ads.', 3.[16]

[15] Gale Document Number: Z2001650443. © Copyright Cengage Learning.
[16] Gale Document Number: Z2001651218. © Copyright Cengage Learning.

Scholars describe the periodical as both enforcing and challenging gender ideology.[17] Cheryl Turner points out its 'duality' with reference to Haywood's reputation and argues that it is 'the idealization of domesticated femininity' authored by 'one of the most conspicuous professional female writers of the period.'[18] King defines it is a political work that 'shows signs of radical populism'.[19] Bannet describes it as a feminist work because it 'devised ways of empowering women'.[20] Spacks argues that it was aligned with Haywood's belief that women should work within the existing structures of patriarchal society that she 'takes for granted almost as though it constituted part of the natural order'.[21] My argument accords with Spacks's view that Haywood works within the prevailing ideology rather than challenging it.

Erminia's story

Erminia's brutal abduction ordeal is the 'most truly pityable' (40) in a series condemning masquerades.[22] The advertisement for the volume of the *Female Spectator* in which this story occurs draws attention to the periodical's purpose to resolve 'Errors in Conduct' that lead to 'Misfortunes' (see figure 18 above).

[17] For a discussion of *The Female Spectator* and feminism, see Wright and Newman, 25-28.
[18] Turner, 56.
[19] King, *A Political Biography*, 14. King suggests that our understanding of Haywood has come down to us from her 'literary enemies' and she seeks to rebalance Haywood's reputation, *A Political Biography*, 6.
[20] Eve Tavor Bannet, 'Haywood's Spectator and the Female World' in Wright and Newman, 82-103 (83).
[21] *Selections from 'The Female Spectator'*, ed. by Patricia Meyer Spacks (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), xix.
[22] In the first story a husband shows his wife how easy it is to mistake a person's identity at a masquerade. The second story is related as historical fact and recounts the story of a young woman who has an affair with a man she mistakes for her husband at a masquerade. The story ends with her divorce and flight to France with her reputation in ruins.

The story is of a young woman and her brother attending their first public masquerade ball. Erminia's social inexperience leaves her overwhelmed by the noise and spectacle of the ball and she becomes separated from her brother. In the confusion, Erminia mistakes a stranger for her brother and asks to leave. The stranger willingly escorts her away from the ball and takes her back to his property where he rapes her. The rapist appears to be an experienced sexual predator. Eventually, Erminia returns home, recounts her ordeal, and resists her parents' pressure to marry the man that had courted her prior to the assault. The story concludes with Erminia retiring to the country and the narrator condemning this decision because Erminia will not fulfil her duty to society as a wife and a mother.

I read this story as endorsing the cultural attitude that the victim's behaviour precipitated her ordeal. I also read this abduction story as colluding in the concealment of abduction as a crime. The story establishes the countrified manners and social inexperience of the principal characters and describes the patriarchal responsibility that devolves onto the victim's brother. However, the narrator ultimately blames the victim for the choices she makes that lead to her abduction. Female agency is dangerous when exercised by a naïve and socially inexperienced young woman.

All of Erminia's choices lead to disastrous consequences. She chooses to attend a masquerade; to seek out her brother; to enter a house she does not recognise, and to remain single. The narrative focusses attention on a young woman's culpability for her sexual violation. Erminia 'accosted' a man wearing the same disguise as her brother who led her away from the ball: 'taking her under the Arm,

conducted her out as she had desired, and went with her into a Hackney Coach' (41).[23] We have seen that 'conducted' is not often used in the lexicon of fictional abductions:

> the Coach stop'd at the Door of a great House: As it was not yet light, she distinguish'd it not from their own, and innocently jump'd out, and was within the Entry before she discover'd her Mistake; […]. She follow'd him, however, up Stairs, where he, pulling off his Vizard, discover'd a Face she had never seen before.
>
> NEVER was Surprise and Terror greater than that which now seiz'd the Heart of that unfortunate young Lady: —she wept, she pray'd, she conjur'd him by every thing that is call'd sacred, or worthy of Veneration, to suffer her to depart; but he was one, to whom had she been less beautiful, her Innocence was a sufficient Charm. (41)

The abductor is sufficiently secure to reveal his face but not his house or its location (implying that eighteenth-century aristocratic identity was constructed by material possessions). After the rape, Erminia is blindfolded and dumped beside a riverbank, which is symbolic of the choice raped women faced – either death or survival but with a ruined reputation.[24]

The gender division in the perception of abduction and rape as separate crimes is illustrated by the abductor's ability to make a distinction between rape and murder that Erminia cannot, 'she begg'd he would compleat the Villainy he had begun, and kill the Wretch he had made; but this was what neither his Safety, nor perhaps his Principle, wicked as he was, would permit him to do' (42). For Erminia abduction, rape, and death are indivisible but her abductor recognises the actions he commits as separate crimes. He distinguishes between abduction and abduction for

[23] Samuel Johnson defined 'accost' as 'to speak to first; to address; to salute'.
[24] Suicide by drowning was not uncommon. See Appendix A, Table 2 nos. 8 and 38.

money: 'He easily found she was a Girl of Condition, and doubted not but she had Friends who would revenge the Injury had been done her, could they, by any Means, discover the Author' (42).

This narrative of female culpability is linked to a variety of contexts: youth and social inexperience, decadent public entertainment, and the sexual aggression of aristocratic men. There is no suggestion that Erminia is complicit through sexual provocation or premeditated intrigue but her culpability is implied through other behaviours categorised as typically female, such as frivolity and social ignorance.

The story incorporates a young and inexperienced brother as the representation of patriarchal authority. His failure to protect Erminia suggests that the social contract by which women accept a subordinated position in the social hierarchy for protection is fallible where men are also socially inexperienced.

The narrative does not endorse Eminia's solution of living a single life. Rather, Erminia is accused of displaying an overly developed notion of honour and of indulging in self-pity rather than fulfilling her social role as wife and mother, 'IT is not every Woman would have resented such an Injury in the same Manner with *Erminia*; and it must be confess'd, that her Notions of Honour and Virtue had somewhat superlatively delicate in them' (45).

There are few examples of single women in eighteenth-century fiction, which suggests that Erminia's wish for a single life is further evidence of her immaturity. But it is possible that the rarity of single women in novels is a fictional construction. Anne Philips argues that 'the dominance of a norm can be so powerful that it

obscures the startling fact that most people live outside its boundaries'.[25] The narrative's strong condemnation of single women is more understandable in light of Philip's observation. Haywood makes plain that the moral of Erminia's ordeal should not be that sexually abused young women should retreat into obscurity but that it is every woman's duty to marry and procreate and that the notion of a single life, whatever the reason, is a betrayal of that duty.

I also read this abduction story as colluding in the concealment of abduction as a crime: 'Accidents of this dreadful Nature but rarely happen' (45). Furthermore, such accidents may happen more often than is 'publickly known' (45). The term 'accident' seems incongruous in a story about a brutal assault. The story implies that women collude in the invisibility of abduction as a criminal act. Johnson defined 'accident' as 'That which happens unforeseen; casualty, chance'.[26] So, if an accident is an event without cause, Erminia's ordeal could not have been prevented. Erminia is not portrayed as provocative. Indeed, the opposite is claimed as her principal attraction.[27] Rather, Erminia is vulnerable because she chooses a path not condoned by perceived notions of behavioural norms. Describing abduction as an 'accident' contributes another layer of instability and vagueness to abduction as a crime.

[25] Anne Philips, quoted in Bannet, *The Domestic Revolution,* 10. Sarah Scott's novel *Millennium Hall* is a well-known example in which women led fulfilling single lives but marriage and domestic felicity were still regarded as legitimate goals.
[26] 'accident' is a complex term in Johnson's dictionary. The definition quoted here is Johnson's third.
[27] Mary Poovey discusses the idea of 'indirection' so that the appearance of virtue could disguise the opposite, 'For a modest demeanour served not only to assure the world that a woman's appetites were under control; it also indicated that female sexuality was still assertive enough to *require* control', *The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer: Ideology as Style in the Works of Mary Wollstonecraft, Mary Shelley, and Jane Austen* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 21.

The index to collected editions of *The Female Spectator* concretised such patriarchal attitudes by presenting a taxonomy of social morality and female culpability in the presentation of this story:[28]

BLEW Domine, Cause of a sad Mistake

Brother, his Distress

Caution necessary in Parents

Erminia, how ruined

Generosity of a Lover

Honour, an Instance of it

The index tells us that Ermina made 'a sad Mistake' and was 'ruined'. Her ordeal is a lesson to parents who must learn 'caution' in exercising their authority and male hegemony is praised for the 'distress', 'generosity' and 'honour' displayed towards a ruined woman. Erminia suffers the ultimate degradation, that of not fulfilling her destiny as a wife and mother, as a result of her failure to abide by strict propriety which resulted in her abduction and rape.

The moral of this abduction story is far from clear. It suggests that young women are culpable for their abduction. But it also suggests that 'abduction' could be an accident that occurs without warning. The motivation for the abduction is the

[28] The first collected London edition was advertised for sale in the *General Advertiser*, 1 August 1746, Patrick Spedding, *A Bibliography of Eliza Haywood,* 462. Other editions followed and in 1751 it was advertised as available in 'four neat pocket volumes' (figures 19 and 20). This publication format gives the periodical a permanent physical presence and a resemblance to novels. This is discussed by Alexander Pettit, 'The Pickering & Chatto *Female Spectator*: Nearly Four Pounds of Ephemera, Enshrined', in Wright and Newman, 42-59. Janine Barchas discusses the importance of indexing and makes specific reference to Richardson's *Grandison, Graphic Design, Print Culture, and the Eighteenth-Century Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 200-213. The index is reproduced in *Selected Works of Eliza Haywood*, II:2:223-227.

lure of female virginity rather than beauty or wealth. This would imply that all young women are potential victims. This story illustrates 'abduction' as an uncertain term. It could be an 'accident', a crime, or an avoidable hazard to which all young women must be vulnerable.

Surviving abduction: *The History of Sir Charles Grandison* (1753-54)

We have seen that 'abduction' in eighteenth-century fiction is a porous term that + holds disparate ideas in tension with each other. This instability results in a complex interpretation of what at first appears to be a simple narrative of violent male aggression and female culpability. The abduction plot in Richardson's novel, *The History of Sir Charles Grandison* (1753-54), illustrates my argument that abduction in domestic fiction endorses the idea that women are culpable for their vulnerability to sexual violence and collude in the suppression of abduction as a criminal act to prevent reputational damage.

The novel is didactic, 'the whole piece abounds, and was intended to abound, with situations that should give occasion for debate, or different ways of thinking'.[29] I suggest that the function of the abduction plot is to teach women that abduction is survivable provided they do not succumb to seduction.[30] I read the abduction plot in this novel as depicting abduction as a familiar hazard and therefore avoidable.

[29] Letter to Hester Mulso, 21 August 1754, *The Correspondence of Samuel Richardson* (1804), ed. by Anna Letitia Barbauld, 6 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), III:207-212 (209). Morris Golden suggests historical material that may have influenced Richardson's plot, 'Public Context and Imagining Self in "Sir Charles Grandison"', *The Eighteenth Century*, 29.1 (1988), 3-18.
[30] Kinkead-Weekes pointed out that Richardson 'expected his readers to examine [the conduct of his characters] in minute detail, and continually to raise the question "Given the circumstances, did he (or she) *do* right?"', 284.

The novel concerns the marriage choice of the titular hero who is the embodiment of the ideal man and a benign patriarchal figure. The plot narrates his dilemma as he attempts to extricate himself from his marriage proposal to one exemplary woman (Italian aristocrat and Roman Catholic, Lady Clementina Porretta) so that he can marry another (English Protestant, Harriet Byron).[31] Harriet is the victim of abduction and Sir Charles's eventual marriage choice, a spirited young woman who challenges social codes of behaviour and the novel depicts her journey towards an understanding of her subjugated place in the social hierarchy so that she can become a suitable wife for the exemplary hero. The abduction plot supplies the narrative crisis for this transformation. Sir Hargrave Pollexfen, an immoral aristocrat from whom Harriet refuses a marriage proposal, perpetrates the abduction.[32] The hero is introduced by the abduction and rescue scenes, which form the climax to the first volume and introduces the moral dilemma that the remaining six volumes work through.

I argue that the abduction plot reveals the nuances associated with female culpability. The novel explicitly absolves men from blame when inflamed by passion for an attractive young woman by locating this argument in the exemplary hero. It is also contextualised in the heroine's masquerade costume that encodes her as a sexual being.

---

[31] Richardson ensures that his hero is not comprised by his initial proposal to Lady Clementina so that he is not perceived to be under any *moral* obligation, as well as ensuring that he is not *legally* obliged, to marry her.

[32] Murray L. Brown discusses Richardson's use of the iconography of Hogarth and Carregio (specifically *Jupiter and Io*) in the abduction scene, 'Sir Hargrave Pollexfen, William Hogarth and "that Obelisk Behind Us": Sexual Violence in "Sir Charles Grandison"', *Philological Quarterly*, 75.4 (Fall, 1996), 455-470.

We know that Richardson grounded his fiction in the realistic depiction of character and situations and in the promotion of religious and moral values. By turning 'young people into a course of reading different from the pomp and parade of romance-writing, and dismissing the improbable and marvellous', his fiction would 'tend to promote the cause of religion and virtue'.[33] His novels are akin to conduct literature and the abduction and rescue scenes in *Grandison* concern familiar themes from such literature: the licentiousness of masquerades, the consequences of immodest behaviour, and the danger of clandestine marriage.[34] Poovey argues that conduct literature provides the means by which women 'conceptualized and interpreted their own behaviour and desires'.[35] Conduct books are also aimed at men although Armstrong points out that by mid-century conduct books for women 'well outstripped' the number available to aristocratic men.[36] I suggest that Harriet's abduction should be interpreted within the convention of conduct literature as a moral message about the dangers of licentious behaviour for both men and women.

We know that Richardson opposed masquerades.[37] Therefore, one interpretation of the abduction plot is that it fictionalises what was perceived as a

[33] Letter to Aaron Hill of 1 February 1741, *Samuel Richardson: Correspondence*, ed. by Christine Gerrard, 88-91 (90).
[34] Rita Goldberg discusses Richardson's use of the conduct book as a template for his female characters, *Sex and Enlightenment: Woman in Richardson and Diderot* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 24-65. Furthermore, Pearson points out that Richardson involved his female correspondents 'at every stage of the planning and writing of *Grandison*, entering into "prolonged debates" with them on a number of key issues', *Women's Reading in Britain 1750-1835*, 26.
[35] Poovey, 16.
[36] Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction*, 62.
[37] Terry Castle observes that 'virtually everyone who spoke publicly about' masquerades opposed them, *Masquerade and Civilization,* 7. She states that 'those who saw, or claimed to see, the masquerade's innocence […] were its commercial promoters, aristocratic patrons, and the world of fashion' and that 'the great middle-class moralists of the period, among them Fielding, Hogarth, and Richardson also aligned themselves with the anti-masquerade forces, and registered their disapproval

true-life avoidable hazard. However, other interpretations are also possible. The abduction and rescue scenes could be interpreted as a fantasy interlude that looks back to chivalric romance: a masked ball, an elopement adventure, and rescue by a handsome knight. Castle makes this point. It is a 'brief interlude in some more serious project of mimetic or didactic elucidation'.[38] Violent abduction as a true-life experience could be avoided if women regulated their behaviour but rescue by a male paragon of virtue could only be a romantic fantasy.

Like Haywood, Richardson chose a masquerade as the location for his abduction scene. Castle points out the 'ubiquitousness' of the masquerade scene in novels in the early eighteenth century and suggests that it signifies danger.[39] My argument agrees with this view. I read the abduction scene as not limited to the masquerade topos (disguise, decadence, dissolving distinctions between social classes) but as presenting abduction as an avoidable hazard. In fact, the ordinariness of the scene suggests that Harriet is culpable for not avoiding such a foreseeable event.[40] However, in this novel, abduction is not catastrophic to a woman's

in complicated fictional and graphic works', *Masquerade and Civilization*, 95. See also footnote 45 below.

[38] Terry Castle, 'The Carnivalization of Eighteenth-Century English Narrative Author(s)', PMLA, 99.5 (October, 1984), 903-916 (903).

[39] Ibid.

[40] In answer to Thomas Edward's question, 'What is become of Miss Harriot Biron, of whom I have heard nothing this long long time?', Richardson replied: 'What! Why the bold Hussey is intending, to steal into Public, even in an Undress. These Vaux-hall and Ranelagh Frequenters have ruined her. Harriet is but a Woman. She sees at all the public Places such shoals of awkward Women, and all followed and admired, that she has expostulated, that neither full Dress nor Decorum, is necessary to make a Woman shine in the present Age of Tastelessness; and Aduacity; and begs she may make one in the Crowd', *Correspondence of Samuel Richardson: Correspondence with George Cheyne and Thomas Edwards*, ed. by David E. Shuttleton and John A. Dussinger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), letters of 15 February 1753, 275-277 (277)) and 20 February 1753, 278-281, (280).

reputation because Harriet successfully defends herself against violent physical aggression and sexual assault.

In the abduction scene, Harriet is taken by deception, 'deluded' rather than forced:

> How can I describe the misgivings of my heart when I first began to suspect treachery! But when I undrew the curtains, and found myself farther deluded by another false heart, whose help I implored, and in the midst of fields, and soon after the lights put out, I pierced the night air with my screams, till I could scream no more. I was taken out in fits. (I:151)

Her ordeal involves physical harm: 'my nose gush'd out with blood' (I:158). It includes a disreputable clergyman, a sham marriage, and the connivance of women willing to cajole the heroine into submitting to her sexual violation. All are familiar motifs from Richardson's other abduction scenes in *Pamela* and *Clarissa*.[41] The scene encompasses so many stock motifs that it forces the reader to recognise it as a literary convention. Castle points out that Harriet's involvement in 'the world of sexual danger' represented by the masquerade 'diverts her toward her ultimate sexual reward'.[42] In other words, Harriet must survive abduction in order to achieve domestic happiness.

Harriet is initially represented as preciously intelligent and flirtatious. These attributes are not signalled as desirable in eighteenth-century fiction and implicate her as culpable for her abduction adventure. I read Harriet's actions in rejecting a marriage proposal from a licentious aristocrat as exposing the cultural tradition that a

[41] Kinkead-Weekes pointed out that this is Richardson's 'fourth abduction' and therefore 'hardly over-inventive', 299.
[42] Castle, *Masquerade and Civilization*, 123.

woman has the right to refuse a marriage offer as untenable because a woman cannot exercise that right without risking sexual violence. Female agency in the choice of marriage partner is a romantic fantasy rather than a social reality. Elizabeth Bergen Brophy notes that Harriet's independence to choose her own husband sets her apart from the lived experience of her readers because it is 'completely the reverse of the typical young woman of the eighteenth century who was totally dependent on her parents'.[43]

The prime concern of Harriet's friends following her rescue is whether she has lost her virginity and whether she was married at the time. The questions from her friends are about her martial state rather than her well-being. Reeves's concern is not whether she had been raped but whether she was married. In other words – will her reputation survive her abduction?

> I will only ask my dear Miss Byron *one* question, said I (forgetting the caution given me below by Miss Grandison) Whether this villain, by his violence – [meant marriage, I was going to say] But interrupting me, You shall not, Mr Reeves, said Miss Grandison. (I:134)

Reeves implies that Harriet's abduction must have resulted in her sexual violation and Charlotte worries that this might be true. The acceptance at face value of Harriet's denial, 'happy indication that the last violence was not offered' (I:134) illustrates the deeply ingrained attitude that sexual violence should be concealed rather than exposed. Benign patriarchy breaks down where reputational damage is threatened.

[43] Elizabeth Bergen Brophy, *Samuel Richardson* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1987), 94.

It is significant that the argument that male sexual aggression is the natural result of an inflamed passion is located in the speech of the titular hero:

> but how can we well blame the man who would turn thief for so rich a treasure? I do assure you, my sister Harriet […] that if Sir Hargrave will repent, I will forgive him for the sake of the temptation. (I:148)

There is no gender opposition to this attitude. Mrs Reeves is 'pleased with this address' (I:148). The competing narratives here are youth and maturity not gender division. Harriet's response to refuse to forgive Pollexfen is an indication that she has yet to reach a mature understanding of a woman's responsibility for her actions under patriarchy.

The view that a prosecution for abduction damages a woman's reputation is another opinion voiced by the virtuous man and titular hero. Sir Charles blames Harriet for attending a masquerade and blocks any suggestion of legal redress:

> He thought it best, he said, to take as little notice of the affair as possible, unless the aggressor stirr'd in it. Masquerades, added he, are not creditable places for young ladies to be known to be *insulted* at them. (I:143)

So, abduction as a crime is concealed by patriarchal ideology that suppresses male responsibility for their sexually aggressive actions. Male virtuous authority is exemplified in Sir Charles's attitude towards violence against women. Harriet's ordeal must remain secret because her value is linked to her reputation, which will survive her abduction only if no claims of seduction emerge.

I have been arguing that the narrative supports the male view of female culpability by condoning Harriet's abduction as the inevitable outcome of a male passion inflamed by a woman's immodest behaviour. This is also constructed by

Harriet's masquerade costume, which is a confused mixture of historical allusion and contemporary attire that objectifies her as a sexual being. Today, her costume is the focus of scholarly discussion about how dress constructs character.[44] However, contemporary opinion suggests that the costume is irrelevant to the function of the abduction scene: 'Harriet […] might have been carry'd off in the same manner if she had been going from supper with her Grandmama'.[45]

Doody suggests that if masquerades are about disguising oneself, 'If the codes are simply reversed, then one should read in reverse.'[46] Jennie Batchelor makes a similar point. Dressing modestly, she argues, was no protection against sexual objectification, 'The persistent appeals made to women […] to dress simply ultimately served to eroticise the modestly dressed woman, whose "simple adornment" […] was "put on" only "to be removed bit by bit by the imagination".'[47] Harriet's costume would appear to be a metaphor for the licentiousness of the

[44] For a discussion of the importance of dress as an indication of individuality, see Batchelor, *Dress, Distress and Desire.* Jocelyn Harris notes the popularity of Harriet's shepherdess costume, *Grandison,* 473 footnote (2) to page 115. Aileen Ribeiro discusses Harriet's dress as an allusion to the Goddess Diana and points out that it is also worn by prostitutes in John Cleland's *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* (1749), *The Dress Worn at Masquerades in England, 1730-1790, and its Relation to Fancy Dress in Portraiture* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1984), 262; 254. Kathleen M. Oliver compares Harriet's dress to contemporary horse-riding attire, *Samuel Richardson, Dress and Discourse* (Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008), 168. The dress is compared to the riding habit as described in *The Spectator*, no. 104, which is also blue and silver and the wearer is mistaken for an effeminate man. *The Spectator* argued that the riding habit displayed a lack of modesty in women. Brophy describes Harriet's costume as a bridal dress, 106. In the novel, Harriet describes her costume as suitable for a 'Subscription Ball', II:116.

[45] Letter from Lady Mary Wortley Montague to her sister Lady Bute of 20 October 1755, *The Complete Letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu*, ed. by Robert Halsband, vol 3 (1752-1762) (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), 97. Kinkead-Weeks agreed with this sentiment and argued that Harriet 'could just as easily have been abducted from an ordinary ball', 299. Castle cites Lady Mary as a supporter of masquerades, *Masquerade and Civilisation,* 95.

[46] Margaret Anne Doody, 'Identity and character in *Sir Charles Grandison*', Doody and Sabor, *Tercentenary Essays,* 110-132 (116). Riberio also comments on the 'dichotomy' between dress and the wearer, 27. As does Oliver, who contends that the dress is Richardson's 'sly wink' to this dichotomy, 166. Brophy argues that the dress 'effectively denies [Harriet's] true nature and suggests the shallow flirt', 106.

[47] Batchelor, 10.

masquerade itself. The relevancy of her dress to the abduction plot, therefore, is complex and alludes to disguise and sexual immorality.

Harriet is initially constructed as flirtatious, witty, innocent, forthright, and capable of deflecting unwanted sexual advances but these attributes are condemned because they motivate her abductor and lead to her abduction ordeal. Tassie Gwilliam argues that Harriet's appearance is 'the outward and visible sign of "woman"/"hypocrite"'.[48] 'I arose, and as the candle stood near the glass, I saw in it my vile figure, in this abominable habit, to which till then, I had paid little attention. O how I scorned myself!' (I:161). I agree with Gwilliam's view. Harriet begins the novel as confident and unwilling to accept a woman's role of subjugated domesticity. She must learn to suppress her nature and accept her place in the social hierarchy before she can be handed the glorious life suitable for an exemplary heroine. Richardson's abduction plot is the pivot that reveals the benefits to women of subservience and obedience to the greater understanding of men.

The abduction scene is narrated in a coherent and logical order that draws attention to its conventional nature. Figure 21 depicts Grandison rescuing Harriet as Pollexfen lies defeated beneath the chariot's wheels. The scene is resolved as a fantasy rescue by a handsome knight riding to the rescue of a damsel in distress, as Jocelyn Harris has noted:[49]

> I […] cried out for help: Help, for God's sake.
> A man's voice […] bid Sir Hargrave's coachman proceed at his peril.

[48] Tassie Gwilliam, *Samuel Richardson's Fictions of Gender* (Stanford: Standford University Press, 1993), 119.
[49] Harris notes the abduction scene as the stock literary motif of a knight rescuing a damsel in distress (see page 201 below).

Figure 21: Charles Grandison delivering Harriet Byron from the clutches of Sir Hargrave Pollexfen, reaching to help her down from the latter's carriage at Hounslow Heath; with two men on horseback watching from the bushes behind to left. (Isaac Taylor, 1778).[50]

[50] @ Trustees of the British Museum. Registration number 1868,1114.492.

> Sir Hargrave, with terrible oaths and curses, order'd him to proceed, and to drive thro' all opposition.
>
> The gentleman call'd Sir Hargrave by his name; and charg'd him with being a bad design.
>
> The vile wretch said, he had only secured a runaway wife, eloped to, and intending to elope from, a masquerade, to her adulterer [Horrid!]: He put aside the cloak, and appealed to my dress.
>
> I cried out, No, no, no five or six times repeated […].
>
> The wicked man endeavoured to muffle me up again, and to force the handkerchief […] over my mouth; and brutally cursed me.
>
> The gentleman would not be satisfied with Sir Hargrave's story. He would speak to me. Sir Hargrave called him impertinent, and other names; and ask'd Who the devil he was? with rage and contempt.—The gentleman, however, asked me, and with an air that promised deliverance, if I were Sir Hargrave's wife.
>
> No, no, no no –I could only say.
>
> […]
>
> But you may better conceive, than I can express, the terror I was in, when Sir Hargrave drew his sword, and push'd at the gentleman with such words as denoted (for I could not look that way) he had done him mischief. But when I found my oppressor, my low-meaning, and soon after low-laid oppressor, pulled out of the chariot, by the brave, the gallant man (which was done with such force, as made the chariot rock) and my protector safe; I was as near fainting with joy, as before I had been with terror. (I:166-167)

The fantasy has its pedestrian element as Sir Charles first ascertains that he is not intervening in a legitimate domestic argument before rescuing his damsel. Eaves and Kempel make this point. Grandison rescues Harriet 'after cautiously and correctly assuring himself that she is not Lady Pollexfen'.[51]

Betty A. Schellenberg argues that the abduction is a confirmation of the gendered structuring of the novel because it fulfils the exemplary heroine's need for exemplary male protection: 'the ideal hero is introduced as if in response to the

[51] Eaves and Kimpel, 387.

exemplary Harriet's desire'.[52] Women need men to protect them from the consequences of their actions. In this case, attending a masquerade in a costume that confuses innocence with sexual promiscuity. Rebecca Ann Barr argues that the abduction scene represents Sir Charles as a 'totalitarian authority' and that this first meeting is 'violent and eroticized' and renders Harriet 'powerless' with gratitude.[53] Bowers refers to Harriet's abduction as an 'old-fashioned abduction adventure' which takes a subordinate place to the drama of the titular hero's dilemma over his attraction to a Roman Catholic Italian aristocrat.[54] Bowers argues that this narrative is replaced in the second volume by a new genre that looks forward to Burney and Austen, 'Familiar seduction *topoi* fade from view along with the foot-stamping Sir Hargrave, and are replaced with a new kind of story with elements now associated with sentimental and "manners" novels.'[55] However, Eagleton argues that the abduction is 'a hollowly melodramatic affair in which nothing whatsoever is at stake'.[56] Sir Charles's chastity is not threatened, his honour is not questioned, and Harriet is not seduced. The question therefore, is what function does the abduction plot perform? I suggest that its function is to point to the everyday nature of abduction as a familiar sexual adventure.

I have been arguing that the abduction plot in this novel is multi-functional. It narrates female culpability for male sexual aggression and therefore their own sexual

[52] Betty A. Schellenberg, '"Using Femalities" to "Make Fine Men": Richardson's *Sir Charles Grandison* and the Feminization of Narrative', *Studies in English Language, 1500-1900*, 34.3 (Summer, 1994), 599-616, (605).
[53] Rebecca Anne Barr, 'Richardson's *Sir Charles Grandison* and the Symptoms of Subjectivity', *The Eighteenth Century* 51.4 (2010), 391-411 (401; 396).
[54] Bowers, 297.
[55] Ibid, 296.
[56] Eagleton, 98.

exploitation. I have been arguing that abduction was perceived to be a familiar hazard, one which women could avoid if only they exercised restraint in their behaviour and mode of dress.

This abduction plot's mixture of romantic fantasy and realistic detail affirms the social hierarchy of male hegemony and female subjugation. We know that Richardson remarked that his hero 'must be seen to enter with an eclat; while the mob shall be ready to cry out huzza, boys!'[57] However, scholars are divided on the dramatic impact of the scene. Juliet MacMaster argues that it is the 'most sensational action of the plot' and Lois Chaber describes it as 'nightmarish' but Mark Kinkead-Weekes described it as 'more plot than theme'.[58] Similarily, Harris argues that it is one of many familiar motifs in the novel, 'The fanciful reference to Harriet as a third Grandison sister stolen from her cradle, her abduction, and her rescue by a knight are all stock conventions' but the artificiality of the scene is not lost on Harriet 'as she fully realizes herself' (xvii). I agree with the view that the abduction scene is conventionally constructed and that its artificiality does not detract from its didactic purpose.

The scene forms an important element of Richardson's abridged version in *The Paths of Virtue* (1756).[59] A considerable proportion of the summary of *Grandison* is devoted to Harriet's abduction. However, the abridgement reverses the order of the novel so that the abduction occurs midway through the story rather than

[57] Letter to Lady Bradshaigh of 24 March 1751, Barbauld, VI:85-89 (86).
[58] Juliet MacMaster, '*Sir Charles Grandison*: Richardson on Body and Character', in Blewett, 246-267 (252); Lois A. Chaber, 'Sufficient to the Day': Anxiety in *Sir Charles Grandison*, in Blewett, 268-293 (273); Kinkead-Weekes, 299.
[59] *The Paths of Virtue Delineated*, 135-232. The abduction scene comprises pages 181-191.

at the beginning. The abridgement follows a linear timeline beginning with the Italian scenes and Clementina's loss of reason over Sir Charles's religious affiliation so there is no mystery about his reluctance to commit to Harriet. This timeline relegates the abduction to a sub-plot and is much less dramatic than Clementina's sensational descent into madness. This reverse order emphasises the conventional nature of Harriet's abduction ordeal.

The novel's reception history indicates that the characterisation of Harriet provoked debate.[60] For example, the *Gentleman's Magazine* offered praise for the characterisation of Harriet and Sir Charles as they 'shew us human nature in its true dignity and perfection'.[61] Frequent mention is made of Harriet in John Bennet's *Letters to a young lady, on a variety of useful and interesting subjects*, which suggests that Harriet was a role model for young women but Bennet is referring to Harriet's altered character after her abduction rather than on the independent young woman before her ordeal.[62] Not everyone agreed. A poem by Anna Williams, published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* praised Clementina rather than Harriet: 'In

[60] Richardson teased his correspondent, Miss Mulso, about Harriet's characterisation: 'Is she not the aggressor? Can't she let the man alone? Disliking this man, refusing that, to the number of half a score, she no longer sees a man whom every body admires for his goodness, and for his personal graces, but he must be hers the moment sets her eyes upon him', Letter to Miss Mulso, 11 July 1751, in Barbauld, III:166-170 (168).

[61] 'Letter', *The Gentleman's Magazine: And Historical Chronicle, Jan.1736-Dec.1833*, 23 (November, 1753), 511-512 (511). However, Harriet's abduction is not mentioned.

[62] John Bennett, *Letters to a young lady .....*, in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, 2 vols (Warrington: printed by W. Eyres, for the author, and sold by G.G.J. and J. Robinsons, Pater-Noster Row; Messrs. Rivingtons, and J. Johnson, St. Paul's Church-Yard; T. Cadell, in the Strand; J. Murray, Fleet-Street, London; and I. Clarke, Manchester, MDCCLXXXIX. [1789]), II.
Patrick Parrinder points out that other writers parodied the abduction scene and refers to Oliver Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield*, 'Highway Robbery and Property Circulation in Eighteenth-Century English Narratives', *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, 13.4 (2001), 509-528 (515).

Byron all the softer beauties shine,/But heav'nly *Clementina*'s worth be mine'.[63] William Hazlett was also dismissive of Harriet: 'little, selfish, affected, insignificant Miss Byron'.[64] Francis Plumer's pamphlet, *A Candid Examination of Sir Charles Grandison,* took a similar line and was also hostile to the novel.[65] The 'Lover of Virtue' argued that no moral could be drawn from any of the events in *Grandison*:

> unless it be this, that men and women, old and young, after a certain ceremony is performed, may go to bed together, without shame or scandal, or any fear of being called to account for so doing by the churchwardens.[66]

These different responses to the novel are indicative of the unstable nature of the term 'abduction'. The function of the abduction plot in this novel is pedagogical and structural. Harriet survived her abduction but only by accepting her culpability and transforming into a culturally imposed exemplar. In my next reading, the heroine of domestic fiction is a very different exemplar from Harriet Byron. I argue that the abduction plot that structures Sarah Fielding's novel, *The History of Ophelia,* questions this discourse of female culpability.

Changing perceptions: *The History of Ophelia* (1760)

The History of Ophelia recounts events that lead to the titular heroine's marriage to the man who violently abducts her from her pastoral idyll and attempts to seduce her.

---

[63] Anna Williams, "VERSES to Mr RICHARDSON, on His History of Sir CHARLES GRANDISON", *The Gentleman's Magazine: And Historical Chronicle, Jan.1736-Dec.1833*, 24 (January, 1754), 40.
[64] William Hazlitt, *Lectures on the English Comic Writers and Fugitive Writings* (London: J. M Dent, 1967), 120. Hazlitt delivered his lectures in December 1818 and January 1819.
[65] Francis Plumer's pamphlet, *A candid examination of the history of Sir Charles Grandison* (1754), 3rd edn. (New York: Garland Publishing, 1974).
[66] Lover of virtue, *Critical remarks on Sir Charles Grandison, Clarissa and Pamela ….*, in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (London: printed for J. Dowse, opposite Fountain Court in the Strand, MDCCLIV [1754]), 13. Eaves and Kempel point out that the 'Lover of Virtue' was suspected to be Henry Fielding by Mrs Chapone in a letter to Richardson of 6 April 1754, 409.

It is an epistolary novel in the form of a fictional memoir.[67] Ophelia is the victim of three abductions by which she learns that society is divided by wealth and gender. She represents the idealized woman uncorrupted by contact with modern society until she is abducted to London and exposed to the immorality of city life and introduced to the concept of sexual aggression.

Ophelia's rural existence is untouched by authoritative male influence. Her initial abduction introduces the narrative of women as dangerous sexual beings. She is not an heiress, so there is no financial imperative driving the plot forward, and no suggestion that the crime of 'stealing an heiress' has been committed. Furthermore, as an idealized portrayal of pastoral innocence, Ophelia cannot be culpable for inciting male passion. The novel ends in the conventional marriage between the heroine and the reformed rake but this romantic resolution is disrupted by the pragmatic acknowledgement that the licentious aristocrat remains unreformed. The female maverick conforms to the ideology of the exemplary heroine and in doing so enhances her role in the social hierarchy through the conventional route of marriage. However, this route is revealed as fundamentally flawed. I argue that the bleakness of *Ophelia* looks ahead to a new narrative for gender relations.

Gillian Skinner points out that Ophelia's upbringing in an isolated Welsh valley and her abduction to urban London means that patriarchy is irrelevant to Ophelia because she 'has no need to take part in this strange system on her own account since she has been provided with everything she could want by the man

[67] Deborah Downs-Meirs describes it as a 'fictional autobiography', 'Springing the Trap: Subtexts and Subversions', *Fetter'd or Free,* 308-323 (318).

responsible for abducting her from her Eden'.[68] I agree with this interpretation. Ophelia's extreme isolation in which almost her only contact is with her aunt means that she has no investment in patriarchy and no comprehension of the gendered division of society. I read the abduction scenes in this novel as indicative of nascent female agency. Over the course of the novel, Ophelia questions male hegemony but eventually accepts subjugation as the only means to achieve financial security.

When the novel opens, Ophelia is a blank canvas in terms of her knowledge of the social and cultural conventions of contemporary society: 'I had never seen any of my own Species but my Aunt, and a few Times an old Man' (45).[69] Skinner points out that Ophelia 'possesses a prelapsarian innocence'.[70] I read the abduction scenes as important narrative devices that demonstrate the nuances of complicity where the rewards are financial security and an enhanced social position. The novel narrates Ophelia's introduction to the deep divisions in society in terms of financial wealth and gender. She confronts the division of society between wealth and class through her involvement with ostentatious luxury, gambling, and sexual intrigue of the decadent aristocracy and the poverty and disease of the lower classes oppressed by that aristocracy.

Deborah Downs-Miers argues that Sarah Fielding 'knows she must educate women to understand the reality of their place in eighteenth-century society and then

[68] Gillian Skinner, *Sensibility and Economics in the Novel, 1740-1800: The Price of a Tear* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1999), 45.
[69] The realistic possibility of such innocence is disputed. For example, Loraine Fletcher observes that eighteenth-century girls were not necessarily 'sexually uninformed' because 'The frankness of eighteenth century habits and manners would make such an outcome difficult', *Charlotte Smith: A Critical Biography* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 1998, repr. 2001), 23.
[70] Skinner, 42.

encourage them to work for change'.[71] She describes Fielding's writing strategy as one of 'parenthetical forms' in which the subtext narrates the principal moral precept.[72] In *Ophelia*, the titular heroine is the protagonist in the familiar plot of an innocent young women reforming and marrying a noble rake. Downs-Miers argues that this narrative is the subtext and the main plot is the journey the rake makes from 'cynical seducer to a devoted husband'.[73] I agree with Downs-Miers that there are various levels of narrative in *Ophelia* and I argue that this includes a critique of patriarchy as the 'natural order' of society.

Nancy Paul argues that *Ophelia* is about duplicity in eighteenth-century society and describes the situation of women as 'schizophrenic'.[74] She compares Ophelia with Richardson's Clarissa and argues that such a comparison casts Ophelia 'in a less than flattering light'.[75] She describes Ophelia's characterisation as naïve, dishonest, 'naturally vain', 'intelligent but not principled' and 'determined to embrace as a husband a man she knows to be a villain'.[76] She argues that whilst Ophelia achieves the ultimate victory of marrying her aristocratic rake, she 'acknowledges that a large part of her power lay in her performance'.[77] Similarly, Skinner also argues for duplicity in the characterisation of Ophelia. For example, Lord Dorchester is warned that 'he should say nothing which might tend to lessen

[71] Downs-Miers, 320.
[72] Ibid, 309.
[73] Ibid, 319.
[74] Nancy Paul, 'Is Sex Necessary? Criminal Conversation and Complicity in Sarah Fielding's *Ophelia', Lumen: Selected Proceedings from the Canadian Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 16 (1997), 113-126 (124).
[75] Paul, 115. Peter Sabor observes that, unlike Clarissa, Ophelia is 'abducted but then protected rather than molested', Introduction to *Ophelia*, 7-38 (16).
[76] Paul, 115.
[77] Ibid, 116

[Ophelia's] ignorant Simplicity' (49). Skinner observes that 'simplicity' in the eighteenth-century lexicon is a 'key word' with a double meaning of either artlessness or foolishness.[78] She argues that if Ophelia's simplicity is 'artlessness', then 'The pure simplicity […] of women is always already compromised since some art is essential if they are "to guard their innocence".'[79]

I agree with Paul and Skinner's view that *Ophelia* can be read as illustrating the duplicity of eighteenth-century society. However, I suggest that the novel is a critique of male leadership through its exposure of the divisions of class and gender that impact on the ability of women to contribute to the cultural and social well-being of the country. I argue that *Ophelia* looks ahead to the discourse of female agency in Gothic fiction in which heroines expose and challenge women's position in the social hierarchy and argue for women's positive contribution to the economic wealth of the nation.

Ophelia's initial abduction by Lord Dorchester is violent and mysterious. It occurs at night, 'my Aunt immediately shrieked out, caught my Hand, and we were running with our utmost Speed to our Cottage, when I felt some one seize me, but it was too dark to distinguish the Face of the Person' (51). Paul points out that Ophelia remains silent whilst her aunt 'begged, intreated, and used every Argument to prevail on him to let me go' (51). Ophelia's silence is motivated by 'the Terror' being exhibited by her aunt 'than with any Danger I could apprehend' (51). Ophelia does not speak because she understands the action of her abductor but not its motivation.

[78] Skinner, 43.
[79] Ibid, 44.

Skinner points out that Ophelia 'has no concept of sexual vice and thus she has no idea how to recognise a sexual threat – or even to realise such a thing exists'.[80] I consider that being forcibly carried off is such a complex act that Ophelia could not possibly understand all its nuances. Ophelia's characterisation as a blank canvas suggests that she is Fielding's social experiment and that the novel poses the question: what would happen if a woman with no understanding of behavioural norms or gender relationships is introduced into society? The novel suggests that she would be vulnerable to the multifaceted and euphemistic experience of abduction.

Ophelia has no experience beyond the remote Welsh valley and her relationship with her aunt. Her only experience of men has been the apparently benevolent Lord Dorchester so she interprets her abduction in terms of the disruption of the maternal relationship:

> I thought it impossible he should be guilty of any bad Thing, or that he who seemed to have conceived a greater Affection for me, than I could account for, in so short a Time, should wish to do me so irreparable an Injury as separating me from my beloved and tender Aunt, which I now found was the Intention of the Person who held me. (51)

Abduction introduces Ophelia to the concept of deception: 'Hypocrisy was a Crime of which I had never heard; this was my first acquaintance with Deceit; and Hatred sprung up with it' (52). Ophelia describes Lord Dorchester as deceitful because she has no understanding of the implications of seduction and the social and cultural convention that suggests women are responsible for inciting male sexual aggression. In this way, the abduction scene questions the narrative of female

[80] Skinner, 42.

culpability. The mature Ophelia reflects on her youthful naivety, 'But how could I, ignorant of the Force of an unruly Passion, suspect it!' (51).

Paul suggests that once Ophelia is 'Safely away, the self-admittedly vain Ophelia revels in her Lord's admiration.'[81] I suggest that Ophelia does not resent her abduction because she does not understand the euphemism that being forcibly carried off brings with it: 'I could not suspect him of any ill Design against my Innocence; for all such Views I was totally ignorant, I knew not what they meant' (75). Her ignorance of the convention of female culpability and the social perception of abduction as a prelude to, or an excuse for, a sexual intrigue means that she ignores opportunities to escape, dresses without being conscious of the visual clues signalled by her attire, and attends church without fearing a forced marriage. Her actions are in opposition to those that usually characterise the heroine of domestic fiction. Abduction teaches Ophelia to accept passion as an excuse for violence but she has yet to be confronted with the social significance of this behaviour.

The second abduction scene introduces Ophelia to sexual intrigue and to passion as inciting violent physical reaction. It follows the familiar pattern of mistaken identity and forced abduction:

> I now grew strangely alarmed, though I knew not what to think, and called to the Man to stop, as loud as I possibly could, but with as little success as before; for my Voice had not received equal Strength with my Impatience; and after having screamed myself hoarse, was reduced to wait in Silence for a lucky Opportunity, to do what my Efforts could not; imagining something must soon stop our extraordinary Speed. (83)

[81] Paul, 118.

The scene soon becomes comic as Ophelia is confronted with physical passion for the first time and the abduction descends into farce as the various mistaken identities create havoc:

> The Door flew open […]. I scarcely could discern him before I found myself in his Arms. The Rapidity with which he flew to me, and the Eagerness of his Embrace, astonished and startled me: I never had seen any Degree of such Familiarity in him. I was not sensible of any Impropriety in the Expressions of Affection; but without knowing a Reason for it, I was disturbed with this Address. I could not think such Violence the necessary Consequence of Love. (86)

Ophelia escapes this passionate embrace and locks herself in a closet from which she watches the action through a glass panel: 'I made Use of the Privilege the Glass Door to the Closet afforded me, observing through it, the Skirmish from which I was so happily delivered' (87). What she observes is a comic play: the man she thought was Lord Dorchester threatens to duel with the father of the young lady, whom Ophelia has mistakenly impersonated, and the young lady's mother grapples on the ground with the Innkeeper's wife.

Skinner suggests that this scene addresses the question, 'Were women innately chaste or innately lewd? And if the former, how were they supposed to recognise the perils of a lewd world?'[82] She suggests that 'the innocent and virtuous woman possessed a kind of sexual early warning system' depicted in Ophelia's flight to the closet.[83] Indeed, Ophelia's flees the scene because 'Fright and Ignorance' has made her unable to draw 'any rational Conclusions' (87). I consider that her flight to a convenient safe vantage point allows her to watch the scene as if she is at the

[82] Skinner, 43.
[83] Ibid.

theatre. It acquaints her with sexual intrigue and physical passion without compromising her status as a rustic innocent.

Later in the novel Ophelia is confronted with the constant harassment suffered by the young woman she unwittingly impersonated, 'she had been obliged to make herself an absolute Prisoner ever since she came to Town, having never been able to venture into any publick Place, or large Company, for fear of meeting that vile Man' (252). There is a nuance to this sexual intrigue that criticises social conventions that results in a young woman being forced to meet a violent admirer because social and cultural norms restrict her ability to avoid him.

The third abduction scene continues Ophelia's education in sexual aggression and introduces the concept of the aggressive woman. Peter Sabor refers to it as an 'innovative comic sequence'.[84] Ophelia's increasing sophistication has taught her that being taken by force has serious consequences. Despite screaming and using her voice 'as a Weapon of Defence' (154) she is carried to, and deposited in, a strange house. This time she recognises that she is in danger because she has heard of 'Robberies and Murders' and is 'terrified and perplexed' (155) and even anticipates a sexual threat:

> My Horrors did not end with the fainting Fit they had occasioned; I came to myself in Apprehensions no less dreadful than if certain Death had awaited me. Fear paints in very strong Colours; my Imagination represented to me armed Men, of most tremendous Mien and merciless Behaviour; it cloathed them like the Murderers in *Macbeth*, with the additional Terrors they would wear when one's self was to become the Victim of their Cruelty. (155-156)

[84] Sabor, Introduction, *Ophelia*, 16.

Ophelia has learned that men are violent. This abduction teaches her that the highly competitive marriage market makes women violent too. Armstrong argues that the 'sexual contract' evolved so that rather than aiming to make 'the aggressive female desirable' it provided women with 'security in exchange for their submission to a traditional role'.[85] Nancy Armstrong is talking about mid-nineteenth century novels but aggression in order to achieve marital success is also a feature of late eighteenth-century novels. In *Ophelia*, the aggressive woman takes the steps normally associated with the aggressive man to achieve financial security through marriage.

Ophelia is confined to an isolated mansion until she complies with her captor's demands, which Downs-Miers argues initiates abduction and captivity as a familiar gothic motif:

> The kidnapping of Ophelia who languishes in a drafty, decaying castle until she manages to escape through the use of her wits and because she is protected by her beauty and virtue initiates a sub genre that remains not only vastly popular, but also quite unchanged from its eighteenth-century beginnings.[86]

I read this scene as depicting Ophelia's burgeoning understanding of relationship behaviour. She is free to roam, to socialise, and to attract marriage proposals during her captivity. She rejects opportunities to escape because her increasingly sophisticated understanding of society leads her to anticipate that her absence will inflame Lord Dorchester's desire, and therefore, her opportunity to consolidate her position: 'Nothing more distressed me, than the Notion of my Lord's Uneasiness at my sudden disappearing' (158-159). She makes active attempts to

[85] Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction*, 53.
[86] Downs-Miers, 319.

escape only when he is reported to be losing interest in her: 'I could not support the very Sound of Lord *Dorchester's* Indifference' (184).

Ophelia's brooding inactivity is depicted by Richard Corbould in one of three illustrations he produced for the *Novelist's Magazine*'s reprinting of *Ophelia* in 1785 (figure 22).[87] Ophelia's posture is that of the classic thinking person. She sits with her finger to her chin concentrating on the scene unfolding in front of her. She does not use this obviously engrossing discussion as a distraction from which she might immediately profit. Sabor points out that the mansion in the background 'seems in much better repair than […] depicted in the novel'.[88] In addition, Ophelia does not look oppressed. She is dressed fashionably and her pondering pose suggests that she is taking the long view rather than grasping at transit opportunities for escape.

Ophelia appears to have received few reviews and its reception history suggests that the novel was not viewed favourably. For example, the *Monthly Review* condemned it by suggesting that 'not every performance which is designed for the press, is worth printing'.[89] The *Critical Review* was less brutal and called it 'harmless recreation'.[90] The *British Magazine* reviewed it as 'tolerably entertaining'.[91] Richardson admitted to opening the book but 'read it not'.[92] Lady Bradshaigh read the novel but thought it 'full of very odd, I am affraid some of them, unnatural

[87] For interpretation of these illustrations, see *Ophelia*, Appendix C, 287-291.
[88] *Ophelia*, Appendix C, 288.
[89] K-n-k, 'Art. 3, the History of Ophelia', *Monthly Review, Or, Literary Journal, 1752-1825*, 22 (April, 1760), 328.
[90] 'Art. 18, the History of Ophelia, Published by the Author of David Simple', *The Critical Review, Or, Annals of Literature*, 9 (April, 1760), 318.
[91] *Ophelia*, Appendix A, 280.
[92] Sabor, Introduction to *Ophelia*, 27.

Figure 22: Ophelia (1786)[93]

[93] @ Trustees of the British Museum. Registration number 1875,0710.3333.

circumstances' although she liked 'the reform'd Hero'.[94] However, Catherine Talbot wrote to Elizabeth Carter that she was 'deep in and amused with Ophelia'.[95] Despite the lack of enthusiasm from the mainstream journals, Sabor points out that the novel was republished twice in 1760 and again three years later and it was also, as I have noted, reprinted in the *Novelist's Magazine*.[96] This suggests its mixture of comedy and moral purpose was attractive to readers of novels, if not to the reviewers.

I have been arguing that reading for the abduction plot foregrounds *Ophelia*'s critique of patriarchy and its master narrative of female subjugation. It depicts the titular heroine's progression from rustic innocent to willing participant in the double standards of female behaviour encouraged by social and cultural behavioural codes that assert a woman's culpability for the sexual aggression of men. It portrays a bleak outlook for women who must compromise their principles as their only recourse to achieving a respectable standard of living. Ophelia must learn that lesson so that when she marries her unreformed rake she knows the role she must perform: '"you have conquered all my Resolutions, dispose of the Remainder of my Life as you please, my Happiness is in your Hands, I may repent, but I find, I must comply!"' (275).

[94] Ibid.
[95] Rev. Montague Pennington, *A Series of Letters between Mrs Elizabeth Carter and Miss Catherine Talbot ……*, 2 vols (London: Rivington, 1809), II:323.
[96] Sabor, Introduction to *Ophelia*, 27.

Chapter 5: The gothic abduction plot: resolution in adversity

In this chapter, I continue my argument that the abduction plot may be interpreted to reveal female agency as a challenge to patriarchal ideology and male authority. I argue that the gothic abduction plot functions as a framework for exposing and challenging the cultural perception of women as naturally subordinate and compromised by their emotions. It does this by providing the space for writers to depict women responding to adversity with confidence and ingenuity. I suggest that the gothic abduction plot should be explained as a significant literary device and not dismissed as the 'usual furniture' of Gothic fiction.[1] My argument accords with R. F. Brissenden's view that young heroines 'assumed a special significance' in the eighteenth century when 'women's liberation […] may be said to begin'.[2] I disagree with the view that the abduction motif represents a woman's emotional conflict and that being carried off will 'relieve her of responsibility for her actions'.[3]

I illustrate my argument in readings of abduction plots and scenes in novels of the 1790s. I begin with Frances Burney's *Camilla or a Picture of Youth* (1796) and Charlotte Smith's *The Young Philosopher* (1798) and then move on to Gothic fiction and discuss Ann Radcliffe's *The Romance of the Forest* (1791).[4] I argue that reading these novels for their abduction plots and scenes reveals this familiar motif to be a discourse of female agency.[5] I argue that, in the hybrid novels of Burney and

[1] 'The Count De Santerre: A Romance', *The Critical Review*, November, 1797.
[2] R. F. Brissenden, *Virtue in Distress: Studies in the Novel of Sentiment from Richardson to Sade* (London: MacMillan Press, 1974), 276.
[3] Daniel Cottom, *The Civilized Imagination: A Study of Ann Radcliffe, Jane Austen and Walter Scott* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 53.
[4] In addition to the Pickering & Chatto edition of *The Young Philosopher* previously referenced, I also consulted the edition edited by Elizabeth Kraft (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1999).
[5] Virginia Duff argues that Aphra Behn's novel, *Love Letters between a Nobleman and His Sister* (1684-1687), which fictionalises the abduction/elopement of Lady Henrietta Berkeley with her

Smith, the gothic abduction plot reveals the danger to women of accepting the ideology that the proper response to male aggression should be passive forbearance. I then argue that the abduction plot in Ann Radcliffe's novel posits an alternative narrative in which women challenge that ideology and reveal women to be capable of positive action to determine their future.

I suggest that the abduction plot and scenes in *Camilla* and in *The Young Philosopher* foreground women's discontent with their role in the social hierarchy. Burney's answer is to propose that women can and should be regarded as useful members of society, whilst Smith's answer is to abandon Britain rather than seek to change it.[6] Reading Radcliffe's novel for its abduction plots and scenes posits an alternative to these binary propositions. Her novels seek to challenge women's social and cultural role as subordinate to men and in doing so offer a narrative that posits a new approach to gender relations.

Abduction: the familiar motif

E. J. Clery states that '1797 can be identified quite specifically as the year in which reviewers and critics began to put a name to the category of fiction we now call Gothic or the fantastic'.[7] A year later and contemporary critics were complaining

brother-in-law, Forde, Lord Grey of Werke, shows that women 'who seize agency within patriarchy will be hunted down, arrested, exiled, tried, oppressed, silenced, and abandoned by men more powerful than they', 'Early English women novelists testify to the law's manifest cruelties against women before the marriage act of 1753', *Women's Studies*, 29.5 (2000) 583-618, 597.

[6] See Adriana Craciun, 'Citizens of the World: Émigrés, Romantic Cosmopolitans, and Charlotte Smith', *Nineteenth-Century Contexts: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 29.2-3 (2007), 169-185.

[7] E. J. Clery, *The Rise of Supernatural Fiction 1762-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 148. Clery observes that 'the name varied: "modern Romance"; "the *terrible* school"; "the Terrorist System of Novel Writing"; "Terrorist Novel Writing"; "the *hobgoblin-romance*"'. Armstrong points out that the literary market was not homogenous and that Gothic novels shared the market place with Austen and Scott, *How Novels Think: The Limits of British Individualism from 1719-1900* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 7. Robert Miles points out that production figures show that Gothic fiction maintained a market share of thirty per cent between 1788 and 1797,

about the lack of variety in Gothic novels, 'It seems to be agreed that those who write on the horrific plan must employ the same instruments—cruel German counts, each with two wives—old castles—private doors—sliding pannels—banditti—assassins—ghosts &c.'[8] But not all Gothic novels encompassing such motifs were received negatively. For example, there are at least sixty-seven recurring gothic motifs in Joshua Pickersgill Jr.'s, *The Three Brothers; A Romance* (1803), yet the *Gentleman's Magazine* applauded it as comprising the 'most extraordinary, original, and well-digested ideas'.[9] So, novels comprising recurring gothic motifs found favour with critics and a well-worn plot could still produce an original story.

Abduction is a familiar motif across fictional genres and I have already noted its links to various contexts in earlier fiction including violence, deception, theft, and avarice. Ann B. Tracey's analysis of two hundred and eight Gothic novels published between 1790 and 1830 records 'abduction' as a recurring motif in Gothic fiction. She notes its occurrence in ninety-seven novels published between 1790 and 1811. The victim is female in seventy-six novels, male in forty-three novels and both sexes are recorded as victims in twenty-two novels. Her research links 'abduction' to plots involving sexual aggression, confinement, and problematical marriage.

---

with 1800 being the year when the most Gothic novels were published, 'The 1790s: the effulgence of Gothic', in *The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction,* ed. by Jerrold E. Hogle (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 41-62 (42).

[8] Review, "Dusseldorf; Or, the Fratricide", *The Critical Review, Or, Annals of Literature,* 24 (October, 1798), 236.

[9] Tracey, 128-130; 'Review, 'The Three Brothers. A Romance', *The Gentleman's Magazine: And Historical Chronicle, Jan.1736-Dec.1833* (November, 1804), 1047.

Tracey records some motifs, such as the gothic castle as too 'pervasive' to be usefully noted.[10] (Figure 23 depicts a ruined castle by William Gilpin, whose pen and ink drawings published between 1782 and 1809 depicting the picturesque were very popular.) The abduction motif does not occur so regularly that it is excluded from Tracey's research but it is sufficiently significant to feature as a distinct category. A motif's frequency of occurrence, however, does not circumscribe its interpretation. Ledoux points out that the gothic castle 'did not signify de facto to readers that the heroine was about to be bullied into submission or stripped of her property'.[11] Similarly, I have been arguing that reader familiarity with the abduction motif did not confine it to a single interpretation.

Figure 23: A Gothic ruin inside a river or lake, mountain in the background Brush drawing in grey wash (William Gilpin, 1798)[12]

[10] Tracey, 195. Motifs relating to avarice and inheritance are also not separately enumerated, perhaps for the same reason.
[11] Ledoux, *Social Reform*, 59.
[12] @Trustees of the British Museum. Registration number. 1899,0713.191.

My interrogation of Tracey's research suggests that between 1800 and 1811 there is an increase in plots involving female abduction, seduction, licentiousness, villainesses, and problematical weddings.[13] The usual consequence of abduction – unlawful confinement – occurs less frequently over this period. Perhaps 'feisty' gothic heroines were more successful than their sentimental predecessors in escaping their abductors.[14]

Abduction in hybrid novels: negotiating the threshold of fantasy

Camilla and *The Young Philosopher* are hybrid novels. Justine Crump argues that contemporary readers regarded Burney's novels as 'mimetic realism' akin to dramatic performances and portraiture.[15] Doody describes *Camilla* as operating within the 'normal English social landscape of the 1790s'.[16] However, she describes its plot, characters and discourse as Gothic and Romantic and closer to 'magic realism' than 'strict realism' and describes the novel as mythic, modern, post-

[13] Tracey's research indicates that these motifs (female abduction, seduction, licentiousness, villainesses, and problematical weddings) occur more frequently in novels published between 1800 and 1811 than in novels published between 1789 and 1799. There is also a marked increase in the seduction of a female by a male motif in the novels published between 1800 and 1811. That motif occurs in approximately forty per cent of the novels published in the later decade compared to its occurrence in only eight per cent of the novels published in the earlier decade. There are fewer male libertines in novels published between 1800 and 1811 than in those published between 1789 and 1799. There is a greater number of prostitution motifs in novels published between 1800 and 1811 than in novels published between 1789 and 1799. The prostitution motif occurs in thirty-one per cent of novels published in the later decade compared with its occurrence in twelve per cent of the novels published between 1789 and 1799. (This suggests that female sexuality was more likely to be depicted in novels published between 1800 and 1811.) There is also an increase in the number of villainess motifs in novels published between 1800 and 1811. The villainess motif occurs in twenty-two per cent of novels published in the later decade but only in sixteen per cent of novels published in the earlier decade.

[14] Claudia L. Johnson suggests that 'gothic heroines are often feisty in the midst of their suffering', *Equivocal Beings: Politics, Gender and Sentimentality in the 1790s: Wollstonecraft, Radcliffe, Burney, Austen* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 141.

[15] Justine Crump, 'Reading Frances Burney', in *A Celebration of Frances Burney*, ed. by Lorna J. Clark (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007), 88-99 (92).

[16] Margaret Anne Doody, *Frances Burney: The Life in the Works* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 273.

modern, and surreal.[17] We know that Burney deliberately included gothic discourse in *Camilla*, 'why should not I have my mystery as well as Udolpho?'[18] A. A. Markley described *The Young Philosopher* as comprising 'contemporary conventions' taken from Gothic fiction, the domestic novel, and the novel of sensibility.[19] He described it as 'realistic Gothic' because it had a conventional gothic plot but the majority of the action did not take place within a conventional gothic setting.[20] Barbara Tarling argues that the novel's abduction scenes are 'concretized in the gothic episodes of persecution and imprisonment that test the fortitude and threaten their sanity'.[21] These hybrid novels that mix gothic and realist discourse suggest that depicting Gothic as part of everyday life resonated with contemporary readers.

Novels of mixed discourse are not an unusual feature of the eighteenth-century literary landscape. Paula Backscheider observes that the 'literary milieu […] was deeply familiar and nuanced to them'.[22] Armstrong points out that Richardson exposed his titular heroine, Pamela, to a 'grimly gothic' experience when the plot required her abduction to Mr B's Lincolnshire Estate.[23] Figure 24 depicts Pamela

[17] Ibid, 273; 386.
[18] Letter to Dr Burney, 18 June 1795, *Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay, author of Evelina, Cecilla &, edited by her niece*, ed. by Charlotte Barrett, 10 vols (London: Henry Colburn, 1846), VI (1793-1812), 39-42 (40-41).
[19] A. A. Markley, Introduction to *The Young Philosopher*, vii-xix (xvi).
[20] A. A. Markley, 'Charlotte Smith, The Godwin Circle, and the Proliferation of Speakers in *The Young Philosopher*', in *Charlotte Smith in British Romanticism*, ed. by Jacqueline Labbe (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2008), 87-99 (89).
[21] Barbara Tarling, '*The Slight Skirmishing of a Novel Writer*: Charlotte Smith and the American War of Independence', in Labbe, 71-87 (85-86).
[22] Paula Backscheider, 'Literary Culture and Immediate Reality', in *A Companion to the Eighteenth-Century English Novel and Culture*, 504-538 (504).
[23] Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction*, 123. Clementina's descent into madness in *Grandison* is another example of Richardson's use of mixed discourse.

sitting in the carriage she believes will carry her to her parents whilst Mr B watches the success of his stratagem from an upstairs window. Armstrong sees Pamela's abduction and captivity in terms of the male desire to contain and control and argues that it depicted the heroine's transition from servant to leisured woman. I suggest that the gothic abduction motif in fiction at the end of the century offers female agency as an alternative narrative to that of passive suffering under male aggression. Reading *Camilla* and *The Young Philosopher* for their abduction plots and scenes reveals the perils for women in complying with social and cultural behavioural norms.

The motive for the abduction plot in both novels is related to the disposal of an inheritance and the social chaos caused by complex family relationships where there is no direct male heir. In *Camilla*, Eugenia's abduction scene comprises familiar motifs from socially realist fiction: an exemplary heroine being forced away and married in a clandestine ceremony. It is shockingly realist in its depiction of the pressure exerted on the female victim and Gothic because the victim is disfigured, deformed, and threatened with extreme violence by an increasingly deranged villain. In *The Young Philosopher*, Laura's abduction narrative comprises conventional gothic motifs – a feudal society, the supernatural, and grotesque characters – but the discourse is realist in that the victim thinks clearly and interprets these gothic surroundings in eighteenth-century enlightenment terms.

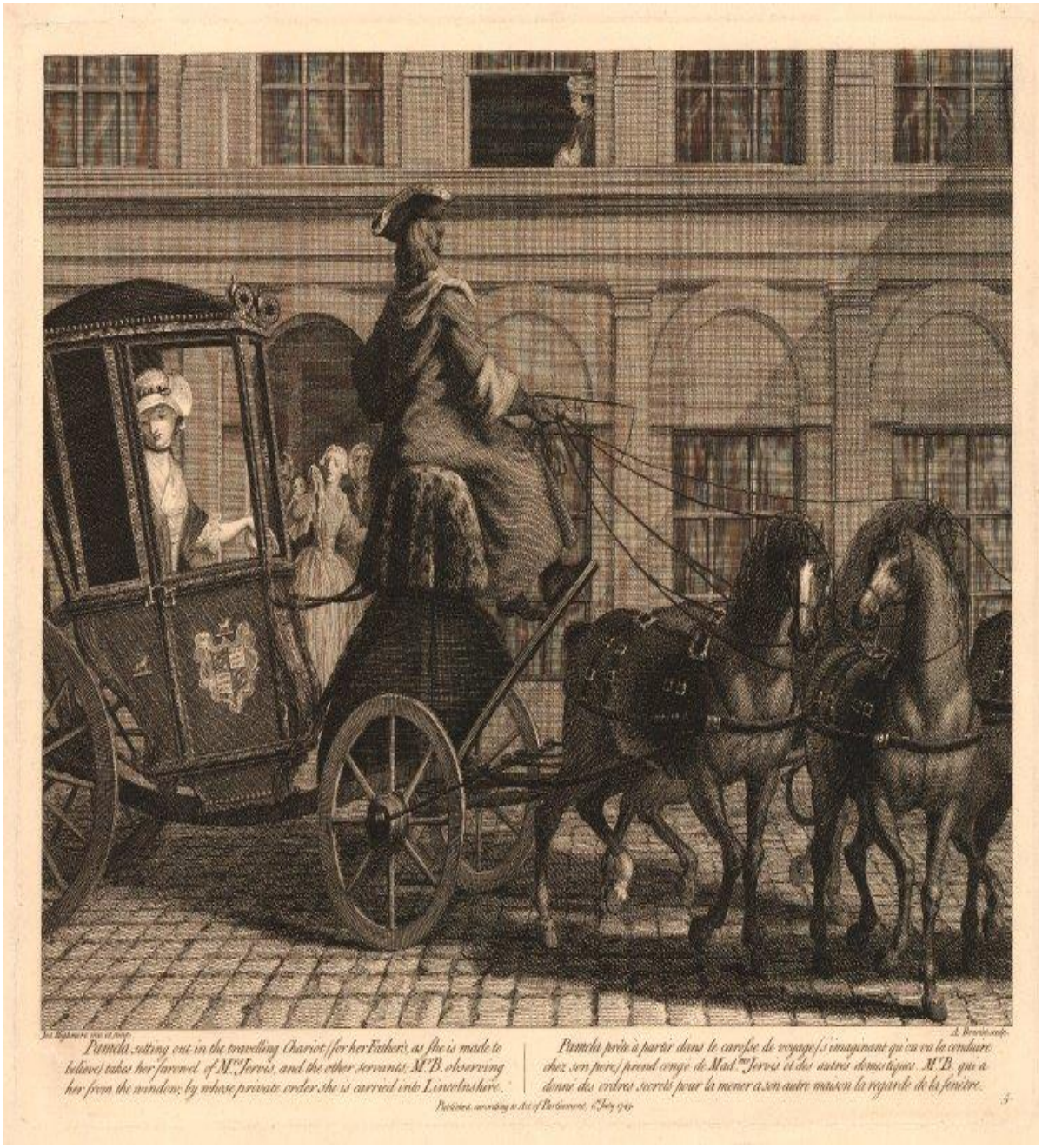


Figure 24: 'Pamela sitting in a carriage, about to depart for Lincolnshire, Mr B observing her from window in centre of building behind' (1745).[24]

[24]@ Trustees of the British Museum. Registration number 1847,0306.17.

There are other abduction scenes in both novels that are narrated overtly as socially realist but which are underpinned by something more fantastic.[25] In *Camilla*, the titular heroine is rescued from an attempted abduction by the hero who arrives in the nick of time to thwart the wicked designs of a licentious aristocrat. In *The Young Philosopher*, the younger heroine is abducted in a sequence of events in which she faces a selection of conventional ordeals as she escapes from one seducer to another. The mixed gothic and realist discourse of the abduction plots and scenes in both novels illustrates a woman's ability to think clearly whilst being subjected to horror and terror.

These complex depictions of abduction suggest that the motif is a protean narrative device that supports multiple interpretations. It functions as the nightmare that lies beneath the structure of everyday society and also as a comic romance adventure narrated as a mimetic depiction of society. This suggests that women negotiate a difficult path between quotidian reality and gothic horror. The hybrid discourse in these novels makes it difficult to distinguish where the threshold between fantasy and realist fiction lies. A careful reading of the abduction scenes suggests that women recognise their lack of control over the major decisions of their lives but can only envision a resolution by evoking a fantasy world.

Fantasy and Horror: Camilla, or a Picture of Youth (1796)

The nature of patriarchy is at the centre of the debate about Burney's social criticism. Some scholars contend that Burney was a social reformer whose novels call for a

[25] Angela Wright discusses the interaction between gothic, chivalric, and romantic discourse in eighteenth-century fiction, 'The Fickle Fortunes of Chivalry in Eighteenth-Century Gothic', *Gothic Studies*, 14.1 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), 47-56.

change in attitudes towards women and others argue that her novels express a woman's lot in life but do not challenge the social order. Spacks argues for the latter position. She argues that Burney's novels 'betray her anger at the female condition'.[26] Doody argues that Burney makes the reader 'question certain norms and practices, and most of all the conventional insistence on the "naturalness" of certain forms of division or categorisation'.[27] Katharine M. Rogers argues that Burney 'never openly suggests that injustice toward women was built into the institutions of her society'.[28] These arguments suggest that Burney accepted patriarchy as the natural order and that social injustice should be resolved within the overarching hegemony of male authority. Kristina Straub argues that there is tension in Burney's fiction between her desire to live within cultural and social expectations and her anger at their constraints, 'Women, in fiction and in life, were rendered powerless by feminine roles that were, in turn, their only means to empowerment.'[29] My argument accords with the view that Burney invited her readers to question the prevailing ideology rather than challenge it.

Doody points out that 'All of Burney's novels are violent. She is a student of aggression and obsession'.[30] She describes the courtship between Camilla and Edgar as 'an enormous spy story – an absurd yet nerve-racking tale of observation and

[26] Patricia Meyer Spacks, *Imagining a Self: Autobiography and Novel in Eighteenth-Century England* (London: Harvard University Press, 1976), 189.
[27] Margaret Anne Doody, 'Burney and Politics', *The Cambridge Companion to Frances Burney*, ed. by Peter Sabor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 93-110 (98).
[28] Katharine M. Rogers, *Frances Burney: The World of "Female Difficulties"* (Hemel Hampstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990), 15.
[29] Kristina Straub, *Divided Fictions: Fanny Burney and Feminine Strategy* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1987), 7.
[30] Doody, *The Life in the Works*, 3.

counterobservation'.[31] Today, Edgar's behaviour could be regarded as verging on the criminal act of stalking. Julia Epstein also argues that Burney's novels are violent, 'In stunning episodes of unprepared, gratuitous brutality, violence repeatedly shatters the apparently conventional social economy the novels' settings appear to subscribe to and protect'.[32]

Burney depicts gender relations in *Camilla* as one of routine violence between men and women. There are scenes of casual physical violence between siblings, such as when Lionel pushes Camilla down a hill with such 'velocity' (245) that she falls into the river and there are scenes of emotional violence such as when he forces Camilla to help him extort money from Sir Hugh (379-385). Domestic violence is portrayed as normal across the social classes. Jacob, a trusted servant in Camilla's household, suggests that Edgar would 'lock […] up' (204) his wife if she proved to be vacuous and shallow. A bird seller beats both his birds and his wife: 'everything's the better for a little beating, as I tells my wife' (492). His attitude is shared by Sir Sedley, the representation of aristocratic idleness and foppery, who insists that wife-beating is a normal aspect of marriage: 'young ladies think nothing of these little conjugal freedoms' (320). The most violent scenes are those related to abduction.

[31] This interpretation suggests that whilst Eugenia's misery is horrific, it is short-lived whereas Camilla's misery is insidious, long lasting, and obscured by an outward appearance of social acceptability. Julia Epstein points out that there is no happiness in Camilla's marriage because Edgar, the 'watcher', 'will look out forever for any break in her unconditional commitment to his welfare and happiness', *The Iron Pen: Frances Burney and the Politics of Women's Writing* (Bristol: Bristol Classical Press, 1989), 145.
[32] Epstein, 87.

There are two abduction scenes in *Camilla*. In the first, the titular heroine is accosted in an abduction scene connected to the new pastime of shopping.[33] The scene is a narrative about trust and the social hierarchy. The second abduction scene involves the gothic heroine and heiress, Eugenia, that leads to violence, forced marriage, and domestic tyranny. These scenes can be read in opposition to each other. The relationship based on avarice and passive compliance between Bellamy and Eugenia is the medieval gothic alternative to the modern romantic and companionate relationship between Edgar and Camilla. I argue that the scenes function as a warning that women are endangered when the ideology of patriarchy in which women trade obedience for protection is not honoured by men. In addition, I point out that the lexicon of abduction has not changed from earlier fiction and continues to conflate abduction with elopement; force with consent.[34]

The titular heroine's abduction scene can be read as social reality, as a chivalric romance, and as a frightening fairy tale. The reader approaches it from the point of view of the heroine and the hero appears like a knight in shining armour to rescue his damsel in distress from a trustworthy 'old man' who suddenly transforms into a villainous sexual predator:

> Camilla had no doubt of the sincerity of this proposal, but would accept no aid from a stranger, even though an old man, while she hoped to obtain that of Edgar. Edgar, however, she saw not […] she concluded him gone; concluded herself deserted, and […] inclined towards Lord Valhurst; who, with delighted surprise, was going to take her under his care, when Edgar rushed forward.

[33] Gary Kelly argues that 'conspicuous consumption' is a form of social criticism, *English Fiction of the Romantic Period 1789-1830* (London: Longman, 1989), 42.
[34] Doody observes that elopement figures strongly in Burney's family, 'There are so many elopements in the Burneys' story that a novelist would condemn them as excessive', *The Life in the Works,* 33.

> […] Lord Valhurst exhibited signs of such irrepressible mortification, that inexperience itself could not mistake the dishonourable views of his offered services, since, to see her in safety, was so evidently not their purpose. Camilla, looking at him with the horror he so justly excited, gave her hand to Edgar. (614-615)

Camilla is vulnerable because her limited understanding of society leads her to expect that an older man of exalted social position would conform to social and cultural behavioural norms. Camilla's notion of society is idealised and her socialisation skills are limited to conduct book recommendations of female accomplishments.[35] She trusts men because she has been led to expect their benign protection, 'Every look was a smile, every step was a spring, every thought was a hope, every feeling was joy! and the early felicity of her mind was without allay' (13). The attempted abduction portrays sexual harassment as part of a young woman's everyday experience that can only be avoided by a fantasy rescue. It functions as a reminder that it is only in fantasy and chivalric romance that virtuous ignorance is a defence against male aggression. As Kate Ferguson Ellis observes, 'too much innocence is hazardous, […] to a heroine's health. She needs knowledge, not protection from the truth.'[36]

Eugenia's abduction is also related to the idealisation of society. Here is her abduction scene:

---

[35] J. A. Gregory recommended that women should be educated in social skills such as how to dress attractively, dance, play music, draw, knit and sew, *A father's legacy to his daughters, by the late Dr. Gregory of Edinburgh*, in *Eighteenth-Century Collections Online* (London: G. Robertson, 1792). Doody argues that contemporaries expected *Camilla* to be about education, *The Life in the Works*, 206.

[36] Kate Ferguson Ellis, *The Contested Castle: Gothic Novels and the Subversion of Domestic Ideology* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989), xiii. Ellis is discussing Radcliffe's novels, but her comment is also relevant to Burney's novel.

> Eugenia, parted from Miss Margland by Bellamy, […] was obliged to accept his protection […]. The coach, he said, he knew, had orders to wait in Pall Mall, whither the other ladies would be conveyed in chairs […]. She desired to go, also, in a chair: but he hurried her by quick surprize into a hackney-coach, which, he said, would be more speedy […]. She had not the most remote suspicion of his design, as his behaviour was even coldly distant, though she wondered Pall Mall was so far off, and that the coachman drove so fast, till they stopt at a turnpike——and then, in one quick and decided moment, she comprehended her situation, and made an attempt for her own deliverance—but he prevented her from being heard.—And the scenes that followed she declined relating. Yet, what she would not recount, she could not, to the questions of her Father, deny, that force […] was used, to repel all her efforts for obtaining help, and to remove her into a chaise. (805)

Eugenia is vulnerable because she also has an idealised notion of society and because she conforms to accepted social and cultural codes of behaviour and expects the same conformity from men. This scene portrays female vulnerability to the dangers of unquestioning acquiescence to male authority and illustrates the impossibility of conforming to the conduct book ideology of the modest women and recognising dangerous social situations. In this novel, the rational example of benign patriarchal care is Mr Tyrold. Eugenia follows his advice that 'simplicity as is compatible with instruction, as much docility for various life as may accord with invariable principles, and as much accommodation with the world at large, as may combine with a just distinction of selected society' (357) but is still attracted to and then abducted by a fortune hunter. Eugenia's virtuous life does not lead to happiness. Instead, it leads to a gothic life of fear and violence.[37]

[37] Jason S. Farr argues that Eugenia's disability is the focus of her characterisation: she is educated because she is disabled and this assuages her trauma at being stalked by Bellamy. Her wealth, inherited because of her disability, makes her vulnerable as does her lack of exposure to novels, and that her 'epic virtue' prevents her from breaking her marriage vows. Finally, Farr argues that Bellamy's death makes Eugenia a powerful widow, 'Sharp Minds/Twisted Bodies: Intellect, Disability, and Female Education in Frances Burney's *Camilla', The Eighteenth Century,* 55.1 (2014), 1-17 (11).

Like Camilla's attempted abduction, the scene foregrounds the result of educating young women in accordance with conduct literature. In this case, the recommendation that reading should be restricted to history, art or science.[38] Eugenia reads classical history but does not learn to socialise.[39] She acquires knowledge without understanding so that her education contributes to her isolation from her family and from her peers. She is abducted because she is not equipped to perceive men as duplicitous, 'she has read classical epics but not novels which might have warned her against fortune-hunters'.[40]

The vocabulary of abduction that describes Bellamy's harassment of Eugenia is consistent with historical reports of abduction that we have already encountered. Eugenia is 'conveyed away' (128), 'beguiled' and 'betrayed', (137) in danger of Bellamy 'carrying her off', (372) 'forced away', 'lost' (798), and 'spirited […] away' (799). The word most often used to describe these attempts is that slippery term 'elope'. Edgar uses it when he tells of Bellamy's carriage hidden in the estate grounds and the spiteful companion, Miss Margland, uses it to describe the attempt to abduct Eugenia from the races. It is also used by the narrator to describe Bellamy's character and the reaction of Sir Hugh to Eugenia's disappearance. Once again, fiction blurs the distinction between consent and force and confuses abduction with consensual elopement. The result of which, in this novel, is a life of domestic violence that is relieved only by the fantasy horror of accidental suicide, 'his cruel

[38] J. A. Gregory argued that even this may cause 'injury' to young women 'by artificially creating a taste, which, if Nature never gave it you, would only serve to embarrass your future conduct', 90.
[39] Eugenia's reading is referred to in general terms as Greek and Latin. Homer and Horace are mentioned but in a general context rather than as specific works on Eugenia's reading list.
[40] Pearson, 130.

and inordinate persecution of his unhappy wife for money; and thence ultimately, the brief vengeance which had reverberated upon his own head' (893).

The reception history of *Camilla* identified Eugenia's narrative as important to the story. The *English Review* referred to her as '*properly* the heroine of the tale'.[41] The *Critical Review* regarded Eugenia's persecution by Bellamy as one of the principal incidents but condemned Eugenia's characterisation as 'preposterous'.[42] Mary Wollstonecraft, in the *Analytical Review,* referred to Eugenia as 'one of the most interesting personages of the drama'.[43] The *Monthly Review* saw Eugenia's narrative as interesting but only as an 'under-part of the story' to the main plot.[44] However, all agreed that Eugenia's story is an arresting narrative and one at which the reader would pause.

The *Monthly Review* also commented on the attempted abduction of Camilla at Southampton but referred to it as 'unnatural'. It is striking that Camilla's brush with abduction is described as such rather than the violent abduction of Eugenia. The *Monthly Review*'s piece suggested that Camilla's attempted abduction 'might have been omitted with advantage'.[45] However, in my view, omitting the scene would weaken the novel's critique of women's socialisation because the contrast with Eugenia's abduction would be lost. Bellamy's manipulation of a socially

[41] Review, 'ART. XXV, Camilla; Or, A Picture of Youth', *English Review of Literature, Science, Discoveries, Inventions, and Practical Controversies and Contests*, 28 (August, 1796), 178-180 (180).
[42] Review, 'Camilla: Or, a Picture of Youth', *The Critical Review, Or, Annals of Literature*, 18 (September, 1796), 26-40 (40).
[43] Todd and Butler, 465-467 (466-467).
[44] Review, E., 'Art. IX. Camilla; Or a Picture of Youth', *The Monthly Review, Or, Literary Journal, 1752-1825*, 21 (October, 1796), 156-163 (158). Dr Burney wrote to his daughter that he found this review raised his 'indignation', Barrett, letter of November, 1796, IV:78-79 (79)).
[45] *The Monthly Review,* 21 (October 1796), 158.

inexperienced young woman and Eugenia's unquestioning obedience to a familiar male makes Eugenia's gothic abduction a realistic everyday occurrence. In contrast to Camilla's ordeal, which is overtly socially realist but where the aggressors are portrayed as grotesque caricatures of Gothic fantasy.

Reading *Camilla* for its abduction plot and scenes emphasises the motif's importance. Both abduction scenes portray innocence as endangering rather than protecting young women. Furthermore, Eugenia's ordeal suggests that education without direction leads to a dangerous lack of understanding rather than an increase in knowledge. Eugenia's familiarity with classical history does not equip her to avoid the trap of abduction by a fortune hunter. These abduction scenes illustrate the social injustice created by compliance with conduct book education and unthinking obedience. However, I do not read them as challenging the position of woman in the social hierarchy as both protagonists survive their ordeals and eventually marry the men of their choice and settle for wifely domesticity.

Wealth, temptation and abduction: *The Young Philosopher* (1798)

The abduction scenes in Charlotte Smith's *The Young Philosopher* also offer a critique of contemporary society. The plot focuses on the tradition of primogeniture and its effect on women's access to financial resources. Smith's heroines are intelligent and socially adept and their education is not the source of their problems. Rather, it is the rules of inheritance that constrain them.

The Young Philosopher foregrounds the social chaos caused by primogeniture.[46] In this novel abduction is a violent act that is also waged psychologically through persuasion, deception, and physical location: 'Smith's focus is not merely on the development of terror and suspense, but more profoundly on the psychological effects of pursuit, abduction, and incarceration'.[47] Perpetrators and their captives are depicted as victims of a social system that concentrates wealth in the hands of the firstborn.[48] The plot comprises elopements, abductions disguised as elopements, and outright abduction to seek a ransom, or to prevent an inheritance from being claimed. The principal female protagonists are hurried from one frightening abduction ordeal to another as they try to impose order over their lives from circumstances that are perpetually spinning out of control. Eleanor Ty describes the novel as portraying the destabilisation of a society:

> Of the four volumes which make up the novel, more than two are devoted to accounts of abduction, extortion, attempted rape, and confinement. The cumulative effect of all these injustices is a picture of a chaotic, violent, and rapacious Britain.[49]

[46] Charlotte Smith's financial problems were well-known to contemporaries and a satire of the legal profession has obvious resonance with her personal history as confirmed by her preface. Biographical details can be found in many texts, such as Sir Egerton Brydges, *Imaginative Biography*, 2 vols (London: Saunders and Otley, 1834), II:75-101 and Fletcher, *Charlotte Smith: A Critical Biography*. Amy Garnai argues that the representation of Laura is not autobiographical but is an 'enactment of "everywoman"; Laura 'literalizes Wollstonecraft's perception of the totality of female oppression, of a world which is, for women, "a vast prison"', *Revolutionary Imaginings in the 1790s: Charlotte Smith, Mary Robinson, Elizabeth Inchbald* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009), 60.
[47] Markley, Introduction to *The Young Philosopher*, xvi.
[48] Stone pointed out that primogeniture did not mean that the eldest born male inherited everything where strict settlement had been made so that an inheritance for siblings was protected. However, it was still an unequal apportionment, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800*, 167-168.
[49] Eleanor Ty, *Unsex'd Revolutionaries: Five Women Novelists of the 1790s* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 148. Ty's chapter, 'Celebrating the Ex-Centric: Maternal Influence in *The Young Philosopher*' (143-155), is an interesting discussion of the various abduction scenes and is relevant to my argument that abduction scenes in Gothic fiction often present realist narrative within the framework of an otherwise fantasy text.

There are six abduction scenes.[50] I focus on two, which involve abduction to secure an inheritance. The novel picks up on the true-life situation that not all abductors are male. Indeed, abduction in this novel is more likely to be perpetrated or aided and abetted by women (abduction by pirates excepted).[51] It is more likely to be committed by family relatives and mothers are particularly implicated.[52] Thus, violence and jealousy is situated within the family unit, which suggests that the family is not the secure location that the patriarchal social system leads women to expect.[53]

The interpolated abduction narrative that comprises most of the second volume is almost exclusively related in the Gothic idiom and in the first person. Here is the abduction scene in which Laura is abducted by Ladie Kilbrodie, an ancient relative:

> Ladie Kilbrodie then, whose gloomy habitation […] was near six miles from Glenmorris, made her appearance one morning […] and with very little ceremony informed the servants […] that as I was oout of my moind, she was coom as my nixt of kin to tak the care of the cheel, and should tak me too her ain hoose. The people around me had no authority to interpose, but when I was made to understand her intention, I resolutely resisted it. I had seen her but once, and had conceived a dislike to her bordering on aversion; and when now she proposed to make me a resident in her house […] I very plainly told her, that I had no inducement whatever to visit her abode […]. This ingenuous declaration irritated my assailant, but by no means turned her from her

[50] Five involve the two principal female protagonists and the sixth involves kidnap by pirates. Smith's own footnote authenticates this latter plot development, 'The celebrated pirate Paul Jones landed in this way more than once on the coast of Scotland, during the American war', 130. The other abductions in the novel relate to sexual aggression, which is a theme I have considered in other chapters of my thesis.

[51] Craciun equates the heroines with the pirates by arguing that division in the novel is not between gender or wealth, but between 'those who are bound to place (and thus to time) and those who are not', 180.

[52] See Mark K. Fulk, 'Mismanaging Mothers: Matriarchy and Romantic Education in Charlotte Smith's *The Young Philosopher*', *Women's Writing*, 16.1 (May 2009), 94-108. Fulk argues that Laura's interpolated narrative is a means to 'explore the problem of matriarchal influence in the mother-child relationship', 94. Markley argued that the abductions of Laura by Lady Mary and Medora by Darnell are mirror images, 'The Godwin Circle', in Labbe, 96.

[53] Similarly, Bowers suggests that *Clarissa* undermines 'any faith that safety is to be found in bourgeois domesticity', 267.

> purpose; and, notwithstanding my tears and entreaties, I was placed on one of the little horses of the country, and led away, guarded by two of the Ladie Kilbrodie's highlanders, while those more immediately belonging to Glenmorris, and even the servants who still remained in the house, dared not oppose what they believed the Ladie Kilbrodie had a right to do, as Glenmorris's nearest relation. (133-134)

The scene foregrounds Scotland as a feudal society.[54] The vernacular of Ladie Kilbrodie is contrasted with Laura's precise English diction making it clear that the customs of one society are alien to the other. Elizabeth Kraft points out that first person narration allows 'intimate identification with the suffering victims of society' in this case Laura, one of the principal protagonists.[55] However, the Gothic motifs of this extended interlude: a romantic elopement, violent death, a ruined abbey, supernatural happenings, and grotesque characters, defamiliarises the reader's perspective by disrupting the perception of the novel as social reality.

Laura's abduction is unmistakably gothic. Terror is invoked through tales of supernatural happenings such as the 'cry of an English bogie or sprite' (137) that foretells death and the threat to her unborn child, which is realised when the baby dies soon after birth.[56] This gothic interlude is given an historical referent in the story of the Countess de Guiche, whose child is stolen at birth, suggesting a correlation between fiction and contemporary society.[57] Lady Kilbrodie's 'notions were those of

[54] Servants witness the abduction but do not intervene. Failing to hide a prisoner or mask criminal acts from servants is a regularly recurring theme across genres. Radcliffe's *The Romance of the Forest* also includes abduction scenes where servants are present but do not intervene.
[55] Kraft, 'Introduction', *The Young Philosopher*, xxiv.
[56] Carrol L. Fry argues that Smith 'balances' Laura's gothic narrative 'with a spoof of gothic fiction' citing the young novel reader who attempts to convince Laura that 'people of consequence believe in spirits', *Charlotte Smith*, Twayne's English Authors Series, DXXVIII (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1996), 110.
[57] Ty points out that the heroine's Scottish ordeal 'functions as a physical and more literal manifestation of the deprivations Laura experienced as the younger daughter in her own family', 149.

an hundred years ago' (133) but her motivation is firmly capitalist and informed by the eighteenth-century tradition of primogeniture.[58]

I consider the Kilbrodie abduction as the climax of the novel. It is the turning point at which the heroine's decision to elope without negotiating a financial settlement is questioned and its consequences drives the remaining action. The function of the abduction plot is didactic. It teaches that elopement and irregular marriage lead to social isolation and family division. It is another example of women being distanced from the protection that patriarchal ideology leads them to expect.

The second abduction plot is akin to similar scenes from contemporary novels in that it is not a single event but is a sequence of adventures. It recalls the true-life Perry/Clerke abduction given its premise that the abductor claims to be motivated by love and not money. However, its consequences reverberate with gothic rather than socially realist discourse as it narrates insanity and imprisonment. Abduction and elopement are again confused. Indeed, the certainty that an abduction has occurred is located in a character that loses her reason.[59] In the true-life prosecution, Perry is acquitted when his wife bears witness that she consented to elope. In the fictional

[58] Smith adds a footnote referencing her first work, *The Romance of Real Life*, 137. The machinations suffered by the Countess involve her child being stolen at birth and its existence being denied by a close female relation who intends to appropriate the family fortune. The Countess is not, however, tormented by supernatural events. Fletcher notes that the cases in *The Romance of Real Life* concern the limits on women's lives and that this is also a 'major theme' in Smith's novels, Fletcher, *Critical Biography*, 86. Ellis argues that *The Romance of the Real* is important to the rise of the Gothic novel because it deals with true life cases rather than romance. She argues that Smith is pointing out that this 'sensational material' 'really happened', *The Contested Castle*, 79. There are three cases in the *Romance of the Real* in which the protagonist is abducted.

[59] Kraft suggests that the interpolation is related to Smith's anguish over the death of her daughter, Anna Augusta, Introduction to *The Young Philosopher*, xxi. Fletcher suggests that it relates to the death of her first baby, *A Critical Biography*, 274. Melissa Sodeman argues that Smith is an 'estranged being' isolated by personal and economic circumstances, 'Charlotte Smith's Literary Exile', *ELH*, 76.1 (2009) 131-152 (136).

abduction, the victim prevails and avoids marriage to her abductor. The fictional heroine succeeds where lived experience champions acquiescence to patriarchal ideology.

Linguistic ambiguity in this abduction scene from *The Young Philosopher* parallels that of the historical record to blur the distinction between consent and force. A procession of minor characters insist that Medora's sudden disappearance is an elopement using terms that we have seen associated with abduction: 'gone off' and 'carry off' (255), 'decoyed' (325), 'conveyed away' (333), 'robbery' (333) and 'stolen' (338). One character suggests that Medora is a fortune hunter who has 'provided for herself' (255) by eloping with a rich man and thus reversing the normal gender roles. Yet another states that Medora must have eloped because 'nobody as would think of carrying a young lady to Scotland to be married against her will' (339). The victim is reported as describing herself as 'carried away' (327) and the more definite 'trepanned' (338) to signal her lack of consent but, as we have seen, these terms are equivocal. A newspaper advertisement adds to the confusion:

> The young lady who lately eloped from _____'s hotel with Captain D***ll, will, it is supposed, be entitled to a very great fortune, as coheiress to the late Gabriel de V_____n, esquire. This, however, is disputed by her cousin Miss C_____l, and is likely to make well for the gentlemen of the long robe, Captain D***ll being determined to support the pretensions of his fair bride, with whom we understand he is returned from his matrimonial trip, and the young couple are gone down to pass the rest of the autumn at Bogner in Sussex. (414)

The advertisement closely copies its historical counterparts by assuming consent rather than force, referring to the woman's financial worth, and providing wholly inaccurate details about the couples' whereabouts. Its language concretises a false

version of events and suggests a basis to counteract a prosecution for abduction. The language of this abduction scene parallels the perception of 'abduction' in the historical record as a euphemism for a sexual intrigue and obscures the criminality of the act.

Medora's abductor insists that his motivation is physical attraction rather than wealth: "'I asshore you, Miss, if it ad not bin that hive a somethink of an unaccountable sort of a attachment for your parson, it is not your fortin as would ave induced me for to ave taken this missure"' (375). His claim illustrates the artificiality of the legal distinction between lust and money. Medora's predicament foregrounds the lack of protection afforded to women in a complaint of force but disrupts the view that this should deter prosecution. Medora is confident of her legal position: 'I will most assuredly have you prosecuted, for I know such conduct is illegal and it is infamous' (375). This dialogue is the central point of the abduction scene and foregrounds female agency in its demonstration of clear thinking in the face of male aggression.

The abduction scenes involving Laura and Medora comprise familiar gothic motifs: a castle, a ruined abbey, and an 'old mansion house of gloomy and gothic appearance' (383), and the supernatural. This gothic world is populated by the normal components of society but made grotesque, such as lawyers that 'stand in place of the giants, and necromancers, and ogers of ancient romance' (4) and greedy relatives that are caricatured as 'disfigured […] by evil passions' (135) or as the devil with 'wild and fierce' eyes that flash 'like flames of sulphur' (140). The Kilbrodie abduction is perpetrated for £200 per annum so that extreme violence for

an impoverished estate envisions Scotland as a barbarous nation. But England is also a gothic nation where innocent women can be stolen and imprisoned because of their financial value. It is the younger heroine, born in America, who displays the determination to fight back against her abductor.

The novel's reception history shows that the interpolated gothic abduction narrative was a focus for contemporary comment although it was not identified as crucial to the plot. The *Critical Review* considered it to be 'a great fault' and an 'interruption' that 'disappoints the reader' and as such is 'always unpleasant'.[60] The review distinguished between events that are 'strange' but not necessarily improbable, 'The story itself, however, is very interesting; and though the events are romantically strange, they do not exceed probability'.[61] Thus, the depiction of a backward and feudal Scotland and the protagonist's ordeal at the hands of a mercenary relative can be considered realistic. The *Monthly Magazine* thought it 'unmercifully long' and 'interrupts the narrative so much as to weaken our interest in it'.[62] But the *Analytical Review* disagreed, stating that it 'cannot fail of interesting the reader'.[63] The *Monthly Review* praised the characterisation of Ladie Kilbrodie, 'We must however except the whole episode of Mrs Glenmorris […] whose portrait, and that of Ladie Kilbrodie, are nicely delineated and uniformly maintained.'[64] Contemporary reviews, therefore, are divided on the value of the interpolation to the

[60] *The Critical Review,* 'The Young Philosopher', 24 (September 1798), 77-84 (80).
[61] Ibid.
[62] *The Monthly Magazine and British Register,* 'The Young Philosopher', 39 (December, 1798), 516.
[63] *The Analytical Review or, History of Literature,* The Young Philosopher, 28.1 (July 1798), 73-77 (74).
[64] *The Monthly Review: Or, Literary Journal, 1752-1825*, Review, 'The Young Philosopher', 28 (March, 1799), 346-347 (346).

novel. Its importance as motivation for the financial problems at the heart of the story suggests that dissatisfaction with the interpolation may be related to its overtly gothic content in a novel purporting verisimilitude.

The scenes of confinement, death, and horror narrated by Laura in the long interpolation reach out to women as a bleak comment on their position in society. Scholars today agree that the interpolation focusses on the inequities of inheritance and how women's lives relate to the Gothic narrative. Markley argued that 'Laura's story is a catalogue of gothic tyranny and oppression that highlights the vulnerability of women in contemporary society.'[65] Kraft argues that the 'social satire' of the first volume 'yields' to 'the familiar hybrid characteristic of so many 1790s novels that portray characters of sensibility in gothic settings ruminating on subjects of political urgency'.[66] Ty points out that the abduction episodes take place twenty years apart and in different locations but society has not changed. It remains 'unenlightened and unprogressive, continuing a system based on violence, greed, and brutality'.[67]

The function of the abduction plot and scenes in this novel suggest that injustice is at the heart of the British social system and can only be challenged in a fantasy world where evil is made visible through the grotesque and women can fight on equal terms with men. Both heroines are unbowed by the gothic terrors that assail them but it is the active American-born young heroine who stands her ground and argues for her legal rights. She meets the lawyers on their own terms and prevails.

---

[65] Markley, Introduction to *The Young Philosopher,* xiii. Kelly observes that Charlotte Smith, along with Mary Wollstonecraft, were amongst 'the most prominent social critics in fiction of the 1790s', 26.
[66] Kraft, 'Introduction', *The Young Philosopher*, xxiv.
[67] Ty, 148.

However, Smith does not posit such female agency as a new narrative to challenge the restrictions of the British patriarchal system. Instead, her characters return to America and a different life.

Abduction in Gothic fiction: the self-assured heroine

I have been arguing that reading for the gothic abduction plot and scenes in hybrid novels foregrounds women's discontent with their place in the social hierarchy but stops short of suggesting a new approach to gender relations. However, in Gothic fiction, I argue that the abduction plot offers an alternative narrative, one that foregrounds female agency to challenge women's role in the social hierarchy.

The view that Gothic fiction explores female agency is not new. For example, Ledoux points out that Gothic heroines 'exhibit physical prowess and find economic enfranchisement'.[68] She argues that women writers offer a 'positive representation of Gothic space' in which they 'construct a vision of a possible future' in which 'hearty heroines have physical and psychological mastery over Gothic spaces and are not afraid to exploit that power to thwart their persecutors'.[69] Ledoux 'challenges the notion that Gothic spaces signifies domestic imprisonment'.[70] My argument accords with Ledoux's and I suggest that female agency in the abduction plots of Gothic fiction depict emotionally strong women as capable of directing their own lives.

Betty Rizzo observed, 'it is an all but general assumption now that women, if unconsciously, read the plight of the gothic heroine as a symbolic expression of their

[68] Ledoux, *Social Reform*, 20.
[69] Ibid, 57.
[70] Ibid.

own'.[71] Like socially realist fiction, Gothic fiction is in dialogue with historical discourse. It offers a narrative that scholars claim has the 'potential as a vehicle for female anger' that 'provides a plot of feminine subversion'.[72] More recently, Ledoux argues that Gothic fiction threatened social values because it 'prompted women to reimagine their home lives and to question social hierarchy'.[73] I agree with these views and argue that the abduction plot in Gothic fiction challenges the discourse in which women respond to male aggression as if it is a consequence of their own behaviour. We have seen that domestic fiction colludes with the ideology that women are responsible for the sexual aggression of men. Writers decide who is rescued and who escapes and so where the gothic abduction plot comprises resolute action and defiance, it posits an alternative narrative for women.

Ellis observes that Gothic fiction does not represent an escape from life or a fantasy world but rather one that was secret: 'The Gothic in fiction […] is a set of conventions to represent what is not supposed to exist.'[74] She suggests that the gothic castle represents 'areas of social reality about which middle-class women were supposed to have no knowledge'.[75] The suggestion that there was a secret world made visible through the conventions of Gothic novels is an intriguing one. Mary Wollstonecraft's polemics on female education are important here. Wollstonecraft's view that women should not be educated like 'a fanciful kind of *half* being' is a call

[71] Betty Rizzo, 'Renegotiating the Gothic', in *Revising Women*, 58-103 (62).
[72] Maggie Kilgour, *The Rise of the Gothic Novel* (London: Routledge, 1995), 9.
[73] Ledoux, *Social Reform*, 92.
[74] Ellis, *The Contested Castle*, 7.
[75] Ibid.

for women to be treated as capable of rational thought.[76] She argued that women were severally disadvantaged by following conduct book recommendations which educated them to be 'useless' members of society.[77] She argued that women must be considered worthy of a proper role in society and should be educated as such, 'women, considered not only as moral, but rational creatures ought to endeavour to acquire human virtues (or perfections) by the *same* means as men'.[78] Ignorance is not a virtue. The way forward is co-education, 'the *knowledge* of the two sexes should be the same in nature'.[79] Maggie Kilgour summarises Wollstonecraft's argument as 'women are trapped in illusions of ideology which prevent them from recognising the gothic reality of their lot'.[80] My argument agrees with the view of a gothic world hidden by the ideology of patriarchy. I argue that the gothic abduction plot can be interpreted as portraying women as rational beings capable of directing their own lives.

Rizzo argued that the Gothic heroine is self-reliant and extricates herself from danger by facing 'her antagonist on equal terms'.[81] Ellen Moers argued that Radcliffe's women are not 'thinking women' but they are active in that they become involved in 'adventures and alarms that masculine heroes had long experienced'.[82] I suggest that gothic abduction plots and scenes are narrative devices that make female

[76] Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), 1st ed., *Cambridge Library Collection* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 77.
[77] Ibid, 38.
[78] Ibid, 77.
[79] Ibid.
[80] Kilgour, 76.
[81] Rizzo, 'Renegotiating the Gothic', in *Revising Women*, 62.
[82] Ellen Moers, *Literary Women* (London: Women's Press, 1978; repr. 1986), 126.

agency in adversity visible. The gothic heroine, I suggest, can be a 'thinking woman'.

Challenging perceptions of womanhood: *The Romance of the Forest* (1791)

The plot of *The Romance of the Forest* is a familiar one of Gothic fiction: an abducted heroine, isolation from normal life, innocent victims of a vengeful aristocracy, and a corrupt medieval society. Radcliffe's novel is a Gothic terror story of power, fear, and suspicion. It foregrounds a gutsy heroine prepared to defy normal codes of behaviour to fight for the right of self-determination. I read the heroine's abduction as an example of female agency in the face of male aggression and the abuse of power. My argument accords with Ty's view that Radcliffe's novels 'can be read as attempts to subvert or challenge the notion of the benevolent patriarchy and the ideological construction of the docile, delicate eighteenth-century woman' and Ellis's view that 'women in the Gothic world […] win not only romantically but economically as well'.[83]

Thomas N. Talfourd described Radcliffe's novels as occupying 'that middle region between the mighty dreams of the heroic ages and the realities of our own'.[84] Radcliffe entwines historical setting (France 1658) with contemporary English society in a complex plot encompassing Gothic motifs such as concealed identity, ghosts, skeletons, and ruined abbeys as well as violent sexual crimes such as incest,

[83] Ty, 23; Kate Ellis, 'Female Empowerment: The Secret in the Gothic Novel', *Phi Kappa Phi Forum*, 90.3 (Fall, 2010), 8-9 (9).
[84] Talfourd's memoir of Ann Radcliffe is incorporated as a preface in *Gaston de Blondeville, or The Court of Henry III Keeping Festival in Ardenne* (London: Colburn, 1826), 3-132 (106).

rape, and murder.[85] The heroine is abducted twice and both incidents eventually lead to positive outcomes. Both expose female vulnerability where patriarchal authority is misused. The second abduction scene evokes Anna Laetitia Aikin's, *Sir Betrand: A Fragment* (1773), in its depiction of opulent decadence.[86] Janet Todd points out that 'Adeline was to be seduced or raped when she is innocent, but killed when she might be rich' and that 'Sexual energy turns quickly into capitalist energy.'[87] Adeline is ultimately neither murdered nor sexually assaulted and she thwarts both abductions by her own initiative.

The novel portrays women as victims of pecuniary greed. The principal protagonist comprises the traditional attributes of the conventional Gothic heroine: beauty, chastity, piety, and modesty. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick argued that 'no other modern literary form as influential as the Gothic novel has also been as pervasively conventional'.[88] However, Diane Long Hoeveler disagreed with the argument that Gothic fiction can be defined by such conventions. She argued that Gothic fiction is a literary category 'only because we do not know what else to call it' and that it is 'futile' to define Gothic fiction through its use of conventions because the genre is

[85] Ann Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, (1791) ed. by Chloe Chard (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). Further references are given after quotations in the text. Tracey indexes twenty-six motifs in the novel: Abbess, abduction, banishment, dissimilar brothers, good clergyman, legal and extralegal confinement, secret door, prophetic dream, duelling, fainting, fratricide, gaming, illegitimacy, emotionally induced illness, unconsummated incest, incestuous passion, libertine, miniature, debauched nun, subterraneous passage, skeleton, storm, suicide, usurpations and a mysterious voice, 136-137. The novel is explicitly dated 27 April 1658, 56. Cottom refers to Radcliffe as 'blithely anachronistic', 56.
[86] See 'Sir Betrand: A Fragment', in *The Oxford Book of Gothic Tales*, ed. by Chris Baldrick (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 3-6.
[87] Janet Todd, "'The Great Enchantress': Ann Radcliffe", *The Sign of the Angellica; Women, Writing and Fiction, 1660-1800*, quoted in Deborah D. Rogers, 235.
[88] Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *The Coherence of Gothic Conventions* (London: Methuen, 1976; repr.1986), 9.

'intrinsically shapeless'.[89] In particular, she suggested that the only boundaries that can be successfully applied to the female Gothic novel 'are the codified "spaces" and "voices" that emerge from its own fragmented discourse system'.[90] These 'voices' depict female characters 'struggling against powerful forces that they think are real and that they believe are poised to destroy them'.[91] I argue that *The Romance of the Forest* employs conventional Gothic motifs that can be interpreted to reveal female agency in the face of male aggression.

Walter Scott observed that Adeline wears 'the usual costume of innocence, purity, and simplicity'.[92] Scott's use of 'costume' is interesting given his argument that Radcliffe's plot, her 'art or contrivance', is 'too visible'.[93] It is possible that 'costume' could also imply a disguise, as in a masquerade. More recent criticism has described Adeline in just such terms. For example, Hoeveler observed that Adeline is 'very professionally feminine'.[94] Hoeveler explained that her term describes writers' construction of their female characters so that they suggest a 'fictitious mastery over what they considered an oppressive social and political system'.[95] She argues that 'These young women not only tolerate all manner of abuse; they actually seem to seek it out. If an event or situation is comfortable, the reader can count on the gothic heroine to pursue trouble.'[96] Hoeveler points out that Adeline is 'passed from man to man […] as just so much excess and inconvenient baggage' and eventually regains

[89] Hoeveler, 8.
[90] Ibid.
[91] Ibid.
[92] Scott, 'Mrs Ann Radcliffe', *Lives of the Novelists*, 211-245 (214).
[93] Ibid, 231.
[94] Hoeveler, 71.
[95] Ibid, xii.
[96] Ibid, 13.

her wealth though the operational of justice rather than engaging any 'crude activities' herself.[97] Hoeveler argued that meaning in Gothic fiction resides in the 'cultural network of discourses' that surround the heroine.[98] The Gothic heroine succeeds because 'masculine hubris, greed and ambition are no match for professionally feminine "genius"' who exposes all his schemes and eventually rehabilitates herself.[99] Hoeveler observed that 'the female gothic novels of this period were thinly disguised efforts at propagandizing a new form of conduct for women' and that gothic novelists 'reveal the ways in which their heroines, and by extension bourgeois women in general, collude and conspire with their oppressors in a passive-aggressive dance of rebellion and compliance'.[100]

But, Gothic heroines are not only passive-aggressive, they are also aggressive in their determination to resolve the mysteries that cloud their paths to financial security and domestic felicity. Rather than suggesting that a woman can be as duplicitous as men, Adeline's actions can be interpreted as those of a woman of sense and courage. Richter Norton suggests that Adeline is a 'self-portrait' of Radcliffe 'as a woman of courage, wit, presence of mind and command of countenance – a sensible and practical girl'.[101] I suggest that this Gothic heroine is

[97] Ibid, 71.
[98] Ibid, 55.
[99] Ibid, 72.
[100] Hoeveler, (xv) and 24. Poovey argues that women are forced to be manipulative in order to achieve their desired social position, 'women must gratify both of men's desires by concealing whatever genuine emotions they feel so as to allow men to believe that *they* have all the power', 192.
[101] Rictor Norton, *Mistress of Udolopho: The Life of Ann Radcliffe* (London: Leicester University Press, 1999), 85. He suggests that 'Certain recurring themes in Ann Radcliffe's novels suggest that she fictionalised this dislocation [her family's removal from London to Bath and her long visit to her uncle] as rejection by her father, the death of her mother and "abduction" by her uncle', 25.

strong-willed and defies normal codes of behaviour to assert her rights. One of the means to portray this female agency is the abduction scene.

In this novel, the first abduction scene is the catalyst for the overarching plot. The reader is in the same position as the heroine, who asks 'But why abandon me to the power of strangers, to men, whose countenances bore the stamp of villainy' (42). This abduction is only revealed to be a criminal act when the true relationship between the perpetrator and the victim is revealed as usurper and usurped at the end of the novel, thus the abduction would be a capital offence under English law. Adeline's belief that she has been punished for disobedience, 'I endeavoured to conjecture the cause of this harsh treatment; and, at length concluded it was designed by my father, as a punishment for my former disobedience' (42) is in keeping with patriarchal attitudes enshrined in law that we have already encountered such as the legal right for a husband to confine his wife where there is 'gross misconduct'.

The heroine's second abduction by a licentious aristocrat is a stock literary motif. In each novel I have discussed, the innocent heroine is an easy target for the sexually rapacious aristocracy. In this novel, Radcliffe adds the Gothic horror twist of incest, which the heroine escapes by jumping out of the nearest window. This is not an elaborate escape plan but an instinctive reaction that is consistent with the heroine's high level of endangerment.[102] However, instinctive action is not enough to escape the danger represented by the decadent governing class. Adeline must take an additional risk to secure freedom:

[102] It is also a familiar method of escape for an abducted heroine. Medora and Ophelia both use this route and neither are passive heroines. Medora also escapes through a garden gate, rather than being abducted through it, as was Clarissa Harlowe.

> As reflection gradually stole upon her mind, anxiety superseded joy: […] she had no friends to whom she could fly, and was going with a young Chevalier, almost a stranger to her, she knew not whither. She remembered how often she had been deceived and betrayed where she trusted most. (168)

This scene suggests that a woman has no other recourse than to trust in a familiar male and hope that such trust is not misplaced. Rather than actively seeking trouble, this Gothic heroine assesses the risks and chooses the option that poses the least threat. This dilemma is a familiar one: which representative of patriarchal power can be trusted?[103] The depiction of the impossible choice that faces women exposed to extreme sexual aggression complies with Ellis's view that Gothic heroines that expose secrets have 'encountered evil, learned from it, and triumphed over it'.[104]

In this novel, the heroine is endowed with attributes typical of the characterisation of women in eighteenth-century fiction as victims of avarice. She is endangered because her existence as a wronged person exposes male corruption; vulnerable because she is wealthy thereby fulfilling the conditions for a successful prosecution for abduction (and thus the perpetrator could be capitally convicted), and unacknowledged by her family so that she has a limited stake in the social contract that offers women protection in exchange for obedience. The abduction scenes in this novel reveal patriarchy as an ineffective means of social control. The novel posits the alternative narrative that women should be educated with the skills they need to protect themselves from male aggression rather than relying on benevolent patriarchy. As Alison Milbank argues, 'Gothic heroines always cause the downfall of

[103] Stoler notes Radcliffe's use of 'the dilemma scene' depicting a choice between '"two equally unpalatable alternatives"', 150-151.
[104] Ellis, *The Contested Castle*, 37.

the patriarchal figures or institutions that seek to entrap them, and their fears are never merely imagined.'[105]

The reception history of *The Romance of the Forest* suggests that it was favourably received. The *English Review* stated that 'The design and the execution are new; and we cannot accuse the fair author of the slightest tendency to the crime of plagiarism.'[106] The *Monthly Review* described Adeline as 'a highly interesting character, whom the writer conducts through a series of alarming situations, and hair-breadth escapes'.[107] The *Critical Review* compared the novel with *The Old English Baron* and *The Castle of Otranto* situating it firmly within the Gothic genre but adds that, despite the ruined abbey, the ghost, the skeleton and:

> all the horrid train of images which such scenes and such circumstances may be supposed to produce. They are managed, however, with skill, and do not disgust by their improbability: every thing is consistent, and within the verge of rational belief.[108]

So, abduction and escape from incestuous sexual assault by a licentious aristocratic uncle is a credible plot. These reviews do not suggest a consistent view of the novel as realist or fantasy. Furthermore, none comment on the violence of the abductions or the sexual aggression that motivates them. The heroine is endangered because

[105] Alison Milbank, 'Gothic Femininities', *The Routledge Companion to Gothic*, ed. by Catherine Spooner and Emma McEvoy (London: Routledge, 2007), 155-163 (155). In this essay, Milbank explores the use of Ann Radcliffe's explained supernatural.
[106] ART. VII, The Romance of the Forest; Interspersed with some Pieces of Poetry, *English Review, Or, an Abstract of English and Foreign Literature, 1783-1795*, 20 (November, 1792), 352-353 (352).
[107] E., "ART. XIII. The Romance of the Forest: Interspersed with some Pieces of Poetry", *The Monthly Review, Or, Literary Journal, 1752-1825*, 8 (May, 1792), 82-87 (82).
[108] "The Romance of the Forest: Interspersed with some Pieces of Poetry", *The Critical Review: Or, Annals of Literature*, 4 (April, 1792), 458-460 (458).

cultural norms that trade obedience for protection are exposed as disguising male aggression and control.

The novel is located in France and set in the distant past but the social and cultural allusions connect it firmly to England and the eighteenth century. The tradition of primogeniture and its effect on the financial status of women is a particular target, 'it appears as if her preservation was the effect of something more than human policy, and affords a striking instance that Justice, however long delayed, will overtake the guilty' (343). The abduction plot depicts the corruption that primogeniture encourages. A woman's survival to an age where she may claim her inheritance is achieved through her ability to think and act clearly and to call on the law, as the ultimate guardian to protect her interest. Radcliffe's heroine may be abducted, confined, and threatened with violence but she manifests rational thought, self-confidence, and bravery to claim her position as a valuable member of society and a contributor to the economic and intellectual wealth of the country.

Conclusion

My thesis has brought together eighteenth-century attitudes to the abduction of women as portrayed by the law, by newspapers, and in fiction. I focus attention on the interest these different forms of narrative share in scrutinizing women's behaviour. I conclude that the abduction plot in eighteenth-century fiction is more important than its status as a stock literary convention would imply. It is a complex motif that allows writers the space to explore the difficult and contradictory position of women and attitudes to sexual relations.

The eighteenth-century legal landscape is complex and abduction law is no exception. By focusing attention on abduction as a specific (even if ambiguous) legal concept, we can take a new view of the much-analysed Marriage Act of 1753. Associating abduction with theft was an important theme in the parliamentary debate. In particular, the threat to inherited wealth posed by abduction and forced clandestine marriage featured strongly in the Attorney General's speech. His argument that preventing *all* clandestine marriage was more important than distinguishing between *types* of clandestine marriage contributed to the blurred line between abduction and elopement in the public's consciousness.

My examination of eighteenth-century legal texts demonstrated that abduction was not a single crime but was associated with multiple criminal activities. This complex network of statutes encouraged judgements to be made about a victim's complicity as part of the prosecution process. The crime of abduction was not easily legible where the test for culpability and complicity relied on the application of strict definitions of behaviour.

An important conclusion from this work is the role of newspapers in navigating the complex and sometimes contradictory social phenomenon of abduction. My research shows clearly that newspapers took up the legal cudgel and colluded in obscuring abduction by conflating reports of missing women with consensual elopement. News reports regularly described missing women in terms of scandal and gossip rather than as victims of criminal acts. Newspapers documented cases in which criminal prosecutions were compromised by the social perception of 'abduction' as a euphemism for concealing sexual behaviour outwith marriage. This journalistic discourse contributed to the suppression of abduction as a violent crime that endangered women. Furthermore, I demonstrated that newspapers rarely challenged the established social order of a hegemonic aristocracy, an upwardly mobile class of merchants, the subordination of women, and the depiction of female sexuality outwith wedlock as aberrant behaviour. This journalistic discourse overlaid narratives of violence and misery with the language of scandal and suspicion.

In addition to the key role of news reports, the new importance of reviewing as an element of the literary landscape in the eighteenth century is a key monitor for changing attitudes to abduction. Readers' decisions could be influenced by the condensed version of a complicated plot in which violence towards women was often a major feature. The introduction of comprehensive reviewing in the *Monthly Review* contributed to the perception of the abduction motif as a simplistic narrative focussed on violence towards women. The comparison I carried out between reviews and the novels they reviewed demonstrated that abduction was often represented as a

familiar hazard that the innocent and the wise survived and the frivolous and vacuous did not.

Furthermore, in making that comparison my thesis has revealed an implicit and sometimes uneasy dialogue between novels and the way they were conveyed to readers. Reviewing condenses and compresses plots and in so doing creates the space for a discourse of aggression to flourish. Many reviews are short, pithy comments criticising a novel as derivative, badly written, and immoral. My thesis concludes that a series of reviews expressing such opinions and appearing on a single page in a magazine or journal gave the impression that violence towards women is commonplace. In many short reviews of complexly plotted novels the heroine would be depicted as culpable for her violent abduction but 'no harm ensued' thereby overlaying a violent narrative with comic expression.

My study of lesser known novels has revealed that the critical language used in reviews implied judgements about a heroine's complicity in her abduction that could be different in degree from that narrated in the novel. Thus reviews provided contemporary readers with a distorted understanding of the function of the abduction plot. Today, we can understand these reviews as interventions in the cultural and social landscape that contributed to the subjugation of women.

The 'true-life' hazard for women of being carried off against their will but suspected of culpability for, and complicity in, a sexual adventure is paralleled in eighteenth-century fiction. I thought carefully about the relationship between fact and fiction in eighteenth-century novels. Abduction plots are pervasive across

fictional genres but the world of abduction in novels moves beyond the probability of true-life accounts and sails into the more imaginative waters of possibility.

By looking at a cross section of novels, I have illustrated the versatility of abduction plots. A key difference emerged between plots in which the heroine survived abduction but not seduction. The complicity or culpability attributed to the victim was a significant factor in the resolution of the plot in the heroine's favour. Even in Ann Radcliffe's embryonic gothic romance, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, abduction was portrayed as a problematic concept. Many writers fictionalised the legal principles of abduction and demonstrated by their abduction plots that the exemplary heroine found the legal and social requirement for non-complicity an extremely tough test to pass.

My thesis has illustrated that the abduction motif traversed the eighteenth-century's rich and diverse literary landscape. An important conclusion is that the function of the abduction plot changed over time but I do not suggest a strictly linear historical progression. We saw that abduction has been a prominent plot device in novels from Samuel Richardson to Mary Brunton and that Mary Wollstonecraft posited an historical progression in the function of the abduction plot from chivalric romance to violent assault. Furthermore, we know that gothic abduction plots and scenes can be found in novels of psychological realism from mid-century as well as in Gothic novels at the end of the century. However, I have argued that there is a change in the narrative of complicity and culpability in abduction plots in late eighteenth-century fiction. A Gothic heroine may be the victim of male sexual

aggression but her narrative is one of female resilience and even recourse to law rather than humility in the face of male authority.

Novels such as Samuel Richardson's *The History of Sir Charles Grandison* (1753-54) aligned with the prevailing patriarchal attitude and portrayed abduction as a predicament that the modest woman should avoid. But other writers rebelled against the idea that a woman should be passive in the face of aggression. This reveals a more complex proposition underpinning the simplistic narrative framework of many abduction plots in which the subjugated woman is at the mercy of a sexually rapacious man backed up by institutionalised authority. An important marker between these two proposition is Sarah Fielding's novel, *The History of Ophelia* (1760), in which nascent female agency is portrayed by the titular's heroine's pragmatic resolution concealed by romantic fantasy. Fielding's novel may be bleak, but it also looks ahead to a new narrative for gender relations. This narrative is clearly present in Gothic fiction in the last decades of the century. Radcliffe's spirited heroine of *The Romance of the Forest* defies normal codes of behaviour, fights for the right to self-determination, the return of her inheritance, and her rightful place in the upper reaches of the social hierarchy.

My thesis concludes that the abduction plot is a pliant, complex, and nuanced motif that allows writers the space to explore social and cultural attitudes to women. 'Abduction' is a porous term in which disparate ideas – sexual aggression, violent crime, and euphemistic social commentary – are held in tension with each other. That tension enables a complex interpretation of what at first appears to be a simple narrative of violent male aggression and female culpability. The ambiguity this

tension creates reveals the abduction plot to be a complex challenge to the social hierarchy and a means to posit an alternative narrative for women.

Research methodology for appendices A and B

I compiled these appendices from the *Newsvault* database, which was the principal search engine for my research, and the *Burney collection of eighteenth century newspapers*, which was the principal data set. I also consulted Bob Clarke's study, *From Grub Street to Fleet Street: An Illustrated History of English Newspapers to 1899*.

Not all the newspapers in the Burney collection are easily legible and it is apparent that some pages have been lost or obscured during the digitalisation process. Furthermore, the quality of the surviving print, the lack of standardised spelling, the use of the long 's', and the many different words and phrases used for abduction and elopement in the eighteenth-century lexicon, constrain the results obtainable from a digital search. It is, therefore, possible that these appendices are not exhaustive.

Appendix A comprises news reports that mention a sudden or mysterious disappearance and Appendix B comprises news reports of elopements to Scotland, usually to Gretna Green. I included in Appendix A, an example of an advertisement in which a husband appealed for his wife to return and promises to make suitable terms (Table 2, no. 3) but I did not extract every example of this type of advertisement. A research project that investigated such advertisements may yield interesting results on the causes of marriage breakdown in the eighteenth century but I considered that this was beyond the scope of my thesis.

I structured my research methodology for Appendix A in two ways. Firstly, around J. M. S. Tomkins' comment that 'Some of the incidents which occur most

frequently, notably duels and abductions, can be paralleled again and again in contemporary newspapers and magazines'.[1] I consulted newspapers on an entirely random basis as a means to discover whether such a randomised approach would bear out Spacks's view about the frequency of abduction in news reports. I detail the results of this randomised approach in Table 1. Secondly, I structured my research methodology around the dates that correspond to the publication dates of the majority of the novels I discuss as a means to highlight abduction cases that occurred around these dates and to ensure a manageable research project. In particular, this brought the Elizabeth Canning (1753), Clementina Perry (1791-94), and Ann Brookhouse (1798) cases to my attention.

Appendix A comprises four tables. Table 1 sets out the newspapers and dates that I used as my research sample. As noted above, a digital search will not be exhaustive and I therefore read each page of each newspaper published on the dates mentioned in my research sample. Table 2 comprises the reports I found of missing women. I included news reports relating to Elizabeth Canning and Ann Brookhouse, which I discuss in detail in chapter two. (The Canning and Brookhouse cases are included in this appendix because they do not involve elopement, which is the principal focus of Appendix B.) Tables 3 and 4 contain the news reports relating specifically to the legal cases surrounding the abductions of Edward Frank and Mary Pearce, which I discuss in chapter one.

Appendix B comprises two tables. Table 1 comprises announcements and news reports that refer to elopement to 'Gretna Green'. I excluded the many

[1] J. M. S. Tomkins, *The Popular Novel in England 1770-1800* (London: Methuen, 1932), 61.

announcements that merely recorded the names of the couple and Gretna as the place of marriage. I found a greater number of elopement announcements in newspapers published in the decades between 1780 and 1800. These dates correlate with the popularity of Gothic fiction. However, the difficulties associated with searching eighteenth-century newspapers mentioned above, coupled with the lack of standardised spelling of 'Gretna' means that this appendix may not contain every notable news report. My research picked up announcements with alternative spellings of 'Gretna', such as 'Graitney', and where it was hyphenated as 'Gretna-Green' with or without capital letters. There may be other news reports containing variations on the spelling of 'Gretna' that my digital search did not pick up. Table 2 comprises the various news reports relating to the elopement/abduction of Clementina Clerke discussed in chapter two.

These appendices complement each other. I argue in chapter two that beyond the legal context of abduction there is an awareness that 'abduction' was a euphemism to disguise the true reason for a sudden disappearance. Appendix A sets out incidences in which sudden disappearances were reported as items of news or where women were advertised as missing by family and friends. Appendix B sets out reports and announcements of clandestine marriage in which the assumption was made that the woman had deliberately disappeared.

Appendix A

Table 1: Newspapers consulted

The first and last columns detail the publications comprising my research sample. I chose newspapers published in the capital cities, London and Edinburgh, and in Bath because of its importance to the eighteenth-century social calendar. The second column details the newspapers I consulted on a random basis as a means to test out Tomkins' statement. The third column details the systematic research I carried out for a specific year. As noted above, these specific years relate to the novels I discuss.

Publication	**Issues consulted on a random basis**	**Full year consultation**	**Publication details**
Baldwin's London Weekly Journal	12 and 26 February 1774; 19 March 1774; 10 and 17 May 1788; 9 Aug 1788; 7 Oct 1797 (no. 30; table 2)	No	1769-1836, London Weekly; mainly news with some literary and cultural content
Bath Chronicle	July and October 1780 January to July 1784 July 1796	January to December 1788 (nos. 31 and 33; table 2)	1760-1925, Bath Weekly; London and provincial news as well as a wide range of local advertisements
Bath Journal	9 January 1792 7 January 1793	No	1744-1916 (under various titles) Bath Weekly; predominately advertisements with some news both provincial and from London
Caledonian Mercury	No	January to December 1811 (nos. 42, 45 and 46; table 2)	1720-1867 (under various titles) Edinburgh Daily; strong political, literary and cultural content

Daily Advertiser	17 May 1749 28, 29 and 30 November 1782 January to April 1752 (nos. 3, 4, 5 and 28; table 2)	January to December 1796 (no.35; table 2)	1730-1798 London Daily; mainly advertisements with news content increasing over the years
Edinburgh Evening Courant (Note: manuscript bound copy consulted at the National Library of Scotland)	No	January to December 1754 (nos. 20 and 21; table 2)	1718-1871 Edinburgh Tri-weekly; varied content of foreign and domestic news, literary and cultural content and advertisements
Gazetteer and London Daily Advertiser	September to December 1760	No	1754-1764; London Daily; news and advertisements.
Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser	March 1780	January to December 1788 (nos. 33 and 34; table 2)	1764-1796; London Daily; varied mixture of news, advertisements and cultural commentary.
General Evening Post (London)	January 1780 (no. 27; table 2)	January to December 1748	1733-1822, London Tri-weekly; mainly news content with some advertisements
London Daily Post and General Advertiser	No	January to December 1741 (nos. 1 and 2; table 2)	1734-1744, London Daily; mainly advertisements with some news
London Chronicle	March 1783	January to December 1798	1757-1823, (under various titles) London Tri-weekly; varied content

		(nos. 38 to 41; table 2)	This was the first chronicle-type paper. Its manifesto said that it would provide accounts of foreign and domestic news 'free from political bias' (Clarke, 79).
London Evening-Post	January 1780	January to December 1753 (nos. 6 to 15; table 2)	1727-1806, London Tri-weekly; content derived from the morning newspapers; anti-government stance
London Gazette	January 1780	No	1666 to date, London; Twice weekly official government publication (first published in 1665 as *The Oxford Gazette*), generally regarded as the first English newspaper (Clarke, 29)
Morning Chronicle	January 1789	January to December 1811 (nos. 42 to 45; table 2)	1769-1865, (under various titles) London Daily; varied content of news and advertisements
Morning Herald	November 1780	January to December 1798 (nos. 36 to 39; table 2)	1780-1869, (under various titles) London Daily; varied content including serious news and advertisements
Public Advertiser	May 1780	January to December 1754 (nos. 14 to 19, 21 and 22; table 2)	1752-1794, London Daily; circulation between 3,000 and 4,000 copies; mainly advertisements but also carried serious news
Public Ledger or the Daily Register of Commerce and Intelligence	13, 18 and 20 January 1786	January to December 1761 (nos. 6, 23 to 26; table 2)	1760-1798? (under various titles) London Daily; mainly serious news content and some advertisements

St James's Chronicle; or, British Evening-Post	June 1780	January to December 1796	1761-1822, London Tri-weekly; serious newspaper with an anti-government stance and few advertisements
Whitehall Evening-Post	April 1794	January to December 1788 (nos. 29, 32 to 34; table 2)	1746-1802, (under various titles), London Tri-weekly; a serious newspaper (from the 1770s) with more news than advertisements

Table 2: Abduction reports

This table comprises the abduction narratives delivered by the research methodology outlined above. I extracted news reports that referred to Edward Frank and Mary Pearce and placed them in separate tables (Tables 3 and 4 respectively) for ease of reference.

The table comprises new reports that concern a mysterious or sudden disappearance or which suggest that an abduction has occurred. My thesis explores in some detail the imprecise language used to report missing people and it is entirely possible that this table is not exhaustive. I would expect to find more abduction narratives in an extended research sample beyond the newspapers and dates selected.

Note: In each case where multiple newspapers are mentioned the quoted report is taken from the newspaper that is noted first in the list.

No.	Date and Newspaper Category: news (unless otherwise stated)	Article or advertisement
	1741	
1	20 March 1741, *London Daily Post and General Advertiser*	Yesterday a Person, who lately married the Sister of a Baronet, was committed Prisoner to the Fleet, the Lady being under Age, and seduced by several Methods from her Guardian.
2	24 June 1741, *London Daily Post and General Advertiser,* advertisement	LAST Saturday about Five o'Clock in the Morning, a young Gentlewoman, about five Feet high, and about 16 Years of Age, whose Name is *Mary B* _____, and has a fair Skin and black Eyes, went from her Father and Mother, with a Servant Maid, whose Name is *Rebecca Wyik*, wears an old Crape Gown, and has red Scars over her Temples; This is to give Notice, that if they will return, they shall be kindly received; and if the Maid does not come or write, where she is, having not been discharged of her Service, she shall be prosecuted according to Law, or any other that entertains them; and if

		any one knows where they are, and gives Notice to Mr. William Knight, at Long Acre Coffee-house, that the Father may speak to his Daughter, shall have a Guinea Reward.
	1749	
3	17 May 1749, *Daily Advertiser*, advertisement	MARY ANDERSON, Wife of William Anderson, went away the 6th instant, and has not been heard of since; therefore whoever will give any Account of her, shall have Half a Guinea Reward. If Ann Philips will come to Mr Anderson and tell where her mistress is, she shall have a Guinea, and no Questions asked; if Mary Anderson will return, she will be kindly received by W. A. if she does not care to come home, and will direct a Line to meet at any Place, I will be there, and all Things shall be made agreeable to her Proposals.
	1752	
4	4 February 1752, *Daily Advertiser*, advertisement	MISSING ever since Saturday, the 25th of January last, a young Woman about nineteen Years of Age of a pale Complexion, with a Scar under one of her Eyes; she had on (when she went from her Relation that Day in Devonshire-Street, near Red-Lion-Square, to go to her Father's at Hammersmith) a black Crape Gown, a black quilted Petticoat with double Diamonds, a Capuchin with a Fringe round it, a seaslet short Cloak and black Horse-Hair Hat, a Gold Wire in her Ears, and a Pair of Silver buckles in her Shoes, with a Piece broke out of one of them: And as it is apprehended some Accident has happen'd to her, if living she is desired to come or sent to her Kinswomen in Devonshire-Street, or to her Father at Hammersmith, who, with her Mother, are both disconsolate at her Absence; or whoever can give any Account of her, so that she may be heard of, at the London Gazette in Devonshire-Street, shall be handsomely rewarded for their Trouble. Note, She had a Bird-Cage tied up in a blue and white Handkerchief in her Hand.
5	1 April 1752, *Daily Advertiser*	On Saturday last an Application was made to Justice Fielding on the following very extraordinary Case. M. Mathieu Bertin, Marquis de Frateaux, Son of Mons. Bertin, Master of the Requests, and Counsellor of the

		Parliament of Bourdeaux, was on some Family Quarrel convey'd from France into Spain by some of his Relations. There he was afterwards arrested by Virture of a Lettre de Cachet, and imprison'd. From this Imprisonment he found Means to escape, by the Assistance and Interest of the Count Marcillac, who is his Cousin. About three Years ago he came over from Sapin into England, where he has resided in a private Manner ever since, and lodged with one Mrs. Giles, in the Parish of Marybon, at whose House he was on Friday last, late at Night, arrested by one Blasdale, a Marshal's Court Officer, who had with him, as a Follower, an Italian, a Person it seems before known to the Marquis; for the Moment that Fellow appear'd, the Marquis started up and cried, *I am a dead Man*, and refused to go with the Officer. Mrs. Giles then sent for the Rev. Mr. Nicholas Robart, who is Minister of the French Chapel at Marybon; to whom, on his Arrival, Blasdale shew'd his Writ against the Marquis, who then, upon the Persuasion of the Minister, obey'd the Arrest, and went to the Bailiff's House, whither one Monsieur Dobies accompained him, intending to stay with him till the next Morning, when Mr. Robart was to procure him and bring him Bail. But the Marquis and his Friend had not been together above half an Hour in the upper Room in the Bailiff's House, before the Italian follower came up Stairs, and acquainted Mr. Dobies that there was one below who wanted to speak with him. Upon this Message Mr. Dobies went down Stairs, where he found no other Person than the Bailiff, by whom he was roughly told, that he must not lie that Night with the Marquis. Mr. Dobies desire'd to stay in any other Room, but that likewise was refused him, and he was in a Manner thrust out of Doors. What became of the unhappy Prisoner after that Time is not yet known, for Mr. Dobies returning in the Morning, with some other Friends of the Marquis, to the Bailiff's House, was inform'd by a Servant Maid and a Boy, who were the only Persons then in the House, that the Marquis was gone from thence in Company with several Gentlemen, and that the Baliff himself was gone out of Town. Mr. Dobies says, that he saw at the Bailiff's House a large Hamper and Trunk pack'd up as for a Journey, and a Pair of Horse-Pistols lying thereon. A Warrant hath been granted against the Baliff, on a Supposition of Murder; but he hath not been seen or heard of since.

	1753	
6	30 January-1 February 1753, *London Evening-Post*	On Monday Night, the young Woman, who was advertised as left in Houndsditch on News Year's Day last, about Nine in the Evening, came home to her Mother, who lives in Aldermanbury Postern, and gave the following extraordinary Account of her being forced away and detained. She had been at Saltpetre Bank, near Rosemary-Lane, to see her Uncle and Aunt, who came with her as far as Houndsditch in her Way home, where she desired them to return. She went from thence into Moorfields by Bethlem-Wall, as the nighest Way home; there she was met and attacked by two Fellows, who pulled off her Hat and Gown, cut off her Apron, then gagged her, and threatened her with bitter Imprecations if she cried out to cut her Throat. They then forcibly carried her to Enfield, to a House kept by one Mother Wells near the Wash by the Ten Mile Stone, which Place they reached about Four o'Clock in the Morning. The Fellows left her in that House, and she has not seen them since. The Woman of the House immediately cut off her Stays with her own Hands, and with the horridest Execrations forced her into a Room, where she was kept upon Bread and Water. She broke her Way thro' the Window almost naked, and in that wretched Condition came home. She left several unhappy young Women in the House, whose Misfortune she has providentially escaped. And Yesterday she went before the Sitting Alderman at Guildhall, where she made an Information of the cruel Usage she receiv'd and Warrants were granted to apprehend the Parties: She declares that she was confined in a Room from 2nd of January to the Time of her Escape, and in that Time she had no more than about a Quartern Loaf and a Gallon of Water.
	24 July 1761, *Public Ledger or the Daily Register of Commerce and Intelligence*	In a news article arguing that the punishment for perjury is not sufficint for the crime, the author cites the Canning case: 'I shall not take it upon me to determine, whether the famous Miss Canning was, or was not guilty of perjury. By law she certainly was found guilty.—What was the consequence?—She was transported. To happier climes, and on a safer shore. If we are to believe public report, she got a husband and a good estate by her punishment. On the other hand, what must the consequence have been had this perjury not been detected? The poor Gypsey was

		condemned, and must have been hanged. Convert the cases, and see how they will appear in the eye of reason and of justice'.
	5 December 1761, *Public Ledger or the Daily Register of Commerce and Intelligence*	From various reports already current concerning Elizabeth Canning and her arrival in England, it is not improbable but we may hear some other wonderful stories relating to this once darling subject of popular converservation. This seems at present the more to be expected because if Fame says true, she intends favouring the public with the history of her own travels and adventures abroad, which, no doubt will be filled in all parts with the marvellous, and as such bought up with greedy expectation.
7	20-22 March 1753, *London Evening-Post*	*Limerick, March 12*. On Monday the fifth between Five and Six in the Evening, as Miss Susanna Grove, Daughter of Mrs Grove, of Tipperary, was returning home with three other Ladies, she was forcibly carried away by Henry Grady, of Ballylahiffe, in the County of Tipperary, Richard [Haslet?], and Several other Persons unknown; for the apprehending of whom a Reward of 200l was offer'd by her Mother, and 120l by the Hanover Club of Tipperary. We have since been informed that she has been secured at Tarbert, and Notice given to her friends.
8	28 April-1 May 1753, *London Evening-Post*	On Saturday the 28th past, about Three o'clock in the Afternoon, a young Woman went out about Business, with Intent to return within Half an Hour, and has not since been heard of, from when her Friends imagine some Accident has befallen her. She is about 22 years of Age, fair Complexion, and middle Stature, and had on when she went out a brown Alapeen Gown, lin'd and a striped Turkey Silk, a strip'd Muslin' Apron, a flower'd Silk Capuchin lin'd with red, and Silver Buckles Diamond cut. Whoever will give Information where she may be found alive or dead, to Mr John Chapman, butcher in Long-Acre, shall receive Ten Guineas Reward on her being brought home.
	5-8 May 1753, *London Evening-Post*	On Saturday Morning, about Eleven o'Clock, as a Gentleman, with a Dog with him, was passing by a Pond near Paddington, he threw in a Stone, which the Dog jumping in after, catch'd hold of the Bonnet of a Woman which lay drowned there; and on dragging the Body to Shore, it prov'd to be the young Woman which was

		advertised in the Paper of last Week to be missing from her Friends since Saturday the 28th past.
9	5-8 May 1753, *London Evening-Post*	On Sunday Evening four or five young Gentlemen endeavoured to take a Man's Wife forcibly from him at Charing-Cross, on which some young Fellows took the Part of the Man and Wife; which so exasperated one of the Gentlemen (as they called themselves) that he drew his Sword, and ran a young Man (an Apprentice to an Engraver in Moorfields) into the Body, of which Wound he continues very ill; though it is not thought to be dangerous: After which they all went off in a kind of Triumph.
10	31 May-2 June 1753, *London Evening-Post*	*Dublin May 26* Tuesday Night a Warrant was granted by the Right Hon. the Lord Mayor against Charles Quin, a Merchant's Clerk, for attempting to marry clandestinely the Daughter of an eminent Merchant; and the Servant-Maid for seducing her, and admitting him into the House: They were both taken and the Servant-Maid sent to Newgate, but the Clerk was rescued. And, On Thursday Night James Blackham and John Bevans were taken, after a desperate Resistance, being charged as two of the Persons concerned in the said Rescue, and committed to Newgate by the Right Hon. the Lord Mayor. Bevans has been since admitted to Bail, but is so dangerously wonded, that he was carried from Newgate in a Sedan Chair, with a Man in it to support him.
11	19-21 July 1753, *London Evening-Post*	*Dublin, July* 14: Last Week died Miss Hall, Daughter of Mr. Hall in Mary-Street, of the ill Usage she receiv'd when she was forcibly carried off, and married against her Consent, as mention'd some Months ago.
12	4-7 August 1753, *London Evening-Post*	We hear that the Lady of a Gentlman of Ireland was kidnapp'd lately by her Husband in the Tower Hamlets, and carried to a Nunnery in France, from whence she escaped last Week, and intends to sue him for a separate Maintenance.
13	28-30 August 1753, *London Evening-Post*	On Tuesday a Person endeavoured to decoy his Wife to a Madhouse, under Pretence of carrying her to Sadler's Wells; but she overhearing him order the Coachman to

		drive to Chelsea, immediately scream'd out; and, on making her Complaint, and appearing to be perfectly in her Senses, she was taken into a Shop, and from thence carried home to her Friends.
14	27-30 October 1753, *London Evening-Post; Public Advertiser,* 30 April 1754 and 4 May 1754	*Charleville, Oct. 16* Wednesday the 10th Instant, in the Dead of Night, William Sullivan, a Fellow of mean Condition, assisted by several of his disorderly Associates, forcibly enter'd the House of Mr Donegan, and carried off his Grandaughter, Miss Margaret Mullane, about 14 Years old, and intitled to a considerable Fortune. They were pursued by forty arm'd Horsemen to a Castle in Ballingary, in the County of Limerick, about eight Miles from hence, where they had so strongly secur'd themselves, that the Pursuers, after several Shots exchang'd on both Sides, were oblig'd to retire: And on the 15th several neighbouring Gentlemen, to the Number of 200, in a Second Attempt, having forc'd the Castle Doors, the Fellows privately got out, carrying the young Lady with them to an adjacent Wood, where they were found. Sullivan and his Mother were taken and carried to Limerick Goal, but his Brother Thomas, and the other Accomplices, made their Escape.
15	1-3 November 1753, *London Evening-Post*	*Dublin Oct 27* Tuesday Night a young Gentlewoman, Daughter to a Shop-keeper in Smithfield (who was in a few Days to have been married to a Person in the Neighbourhood) was forcibly taken out of her Father's Shop, and hurried into a Coach, the Windows of which were immediately hauled up, and the Coachman drove off with the most violent Speed; however, her Cries had alarmed the Family, who, with the Assistance of her Lover, got Horses, and very luckily pursued in the right Road, and came upon them in a Publick-House about eight Miles off in the Navan Road, where after a very great Resistance, they recovered the Lady, and secured three of the Ravishers (one of whom was endeavouring to force her to marry him) and lodg'd them in Newgate. This infamous and cruel Custom of running away with young women against their Inclinations is become of late very frequent.
	17 January 1754, *Public Advertiser*	Patrick Mulvany, under Sentence of Death for forcibly carrying off the Daughter of Mr. McDonough in Smithfield, is, we hear to be transported for Life.

1754		
16	14 February 1754, *Public Advertiser*	On Thursday se'nnight was executed at Edinburgh, pursuant to his Sentence, Robert McGregor, alias Campbel, alias Robert Roy, for Hamesucken and forcible Abduction of Jean Key, Heiress of Edinbelly. He acknowledged the Justness of his Sentence, died seemingly penitent for his Crimes, and declared himself of the Communion of the Church of Rome. Immedeiatley before he was thrown off, and while he was at his Devotions on the Ladder, some of the Populace called out A Pardon! a Pardon! which made him start up and look around about him; whereupon the Magistrates ordered him to be immediately thrown over. After the Body was cut down, his Friends put it into a Coffin cover'd with Black, and carried it without the Westport, where a Cart was waiting, into which they put it, and drove furiously for about a Quarter of Mile, and then attempted to bleed him, to see if possibly he might recover; but no Signs of Life appearing, they proceeded to the Highlands with the Body, where it is to be buried. Note: This famous case is reported in many newspapers and magazines including: *Scots Magazine*, May 1751 (247), June 1753 (48-49) October 1753 (260), and January 1754 (45-47); *Covent Garden Journal*, 15 August 1752: *Old England or The National Gazettee*, 2 December 1752; *Ladies Magazine*, 9 June 1753 (189) and 4 August 1753; *Farmer's Magazine* of March 1810 (67-70).
17	23 March 1754, *Public Advertiser*	On Wednesday last came on at Rochester before Sir Michael Foster, Knt. one of the Justices of his Majesty's Court of King's Bench, a remarkable Trial, wherein the King, at the Prosecution of John Wright, of the Parish of St. Mary Whitechapel, in the County of Middlesex, was Plaintif, against Ralph Mitchell, of the Parish of St. Nicholas Deptford, in the County of Ken, Victualler, Defendant, for rescuing one Eleanor Roberts out of the Custody of the said John Wright, at the said Defendant's House (which said Mrs. Roberts had before been indicted for keeping a common, ill-governed, and disorderly House in the said Parish of St. Mary Whitechapel) when, upon hearing of the Witnesses on both Sides, the Jury were pleased to bring the Defendant in Guilty. And one George Shields being produced and examined as a Witness for the Defendant, was found guilty of Perjury by the Court, and

		immediately taken into Custody : And his Lordship was also pleased to assign the said John Wright, John Knowler, Esq: and Martin Madan, Esq; as his Council, to carry on the said Prosecution, against the said George Shields, at the next Assizes to be held in and for the said County of Kent, in order for the better and more effectual bringing him to Justice, and to deter all others from being guilty of the like Offences.
18	28 March 1754, *Public Advertiser*	WHEREAS Yesterday about Twelve o'Clock, two Gentlemen met a young Lady in Broad-Street pass'd her and met her again behind the Exchange, and walked with her into the Poultry, as as they are charmed with both her Person and good Nature (though she would not accept of the Coach they offer'd) they earnestly entreat the Favour to know where they may again have the Happiness of seeing her, as they are desirous of cultivating a standing Acquaintance with her, if agreeable: she was dres'd in a black Bonnet and Capuchin, and a dark grey Petender, and had a Servant with her, a good wholesome fresh-coloured Girl; in a Linen Gown; and as both the Gentlemen are upon the most honourable Terms, and the Lady's good Nature seemed to display itself during the agreeable Moment they enjoy'd her Company, 'Tis hoped she will not deny them the above Favour, as their Happiness depends upon her Compliance, a Line directed for Q.R.S. to be left at Sam's Coffee-house in Exchange Alley, will be received, and the strictest Secresy may be relyed on.
19	30 April 1754, *Public Advertiser*	*Cork, April 12* Yesterday William O'Sullivan, was tried at the Assizes, for forcibly running away with Miss Margaret Mullane, of which he was found guilty, and received Sentence of Death.
	4 May 1754, *Public Advertiser*	*Cork, April 22* Last Saturday the following persons were executed according to their sentence, viz. William Sullivan, for forcibly carring away Miss Margret Mullan.
20	5 August 1754, *Edinburgh Evening Courant*	Under a heading of 'A Mail from France': 'Evening Advertiser, July 30', 'The R Chamber have been employed for some Days about an Affair of Consequence, concerning the forcibly carring away a young woman.'

	6 August 1754, *Public Advertiser*	*Paris A-la-main,* July 29 The young woman who sued a Man in the Royal Chamber for forcibly carring her off , was cast in Damages and Cost of Suit. Note: 'cast' is defined by Samuel Johnson as 'to defeat'.
21	23 September 1754, *Public Advertiser*; *Edinburgh Evening Courant,* 30 September 1754	*Dublin September* 14 Last Wednesday a young Woman was seduced from Dublin to Lucan, under Pretence of a friendly Invitation, and was met at Chapel-Izod by a Fellow who forced her to Lucan, at which Place they were refused Admittance into one Public House, but were admitted into another, where a Romish Priest wa sent for to marry them; half the Marriage Ceremony was read by the Priest, but when it came to the Woman's Turn to answer, she refused, and burst into Tears; upon which some of Mr. Vesey's Servants who were in the house hearing a great Noise, broke into the Room, and the Preist made his Escape. The Man and his Associates were taken into Custody, and sent to Kilmainham Goal.
22	5 October 1754, *Public Advertiser*	In the category of 'news' and promised as 'the second case […] of an innocent Person's being condemned to die on circumstantial Evidence' is the following story: A Gentleman died possessed of a very considerable Fortune, which he left to an only Child, a Daughter and appointed his Brother to be her Guardian, and Executor of his Will. The young Lady was then about Eighteen; and if she happen'd to die unmarried, or, if married, without Children, her Fortune was left to her Guardian and to his Heirs. As the Interest of the Uncle was incompatible with the Life of the Niece, several other Relations hinted, that it would not be proper for them to live together. Whether they were willing to prevent any Occasion of Slander against the Uncle, in case of the young Lady's Death; whether they had any Apprehension of her being in Danger; or whether they were only discontented with the Father's Disposition of his Fortune, and therefore propagated Rumours to the Prejudice of those who possessed it, cannot be known; the Uncle, however, took his Niece to his House near Epping Forest, and soon afterwards she disappeared. Great Enquiry was made after her, and it appearing that the Day she was missing she went out with her Uncle into the Forest, and that he returned without her, he was taken into Custody. A few Days afterwards he went thro' a long Examination, in which he acknowledged, that he went out with her, and

		pretended that she found Means to loiter behind him as they were returning Home; that he sought her in the Forest as soon as he missed her; and that he knew not where she was, or what was become of her. This Account was thought improbable, and his apparent Interest in the Death of his Ward, and perhaps the petulant Zeal of other Relations, concurred to raise and strengthen Suspicions against him, and he was detained in Custody. Some new Circumstances were every Day rising against him. It was found, that the young Lady had been addressed by a neighbouring Gentleman, who had a few Days before she was missing, set out on a Journey to the North; and that she had declared she would marry him when he returned. That her Uncle had frequently expressed his Disapprobation of the Match in very strong Terms: That she had often wept and reproached him with Unkindness and an Abuse of his Power. A Woman was also produced, who swore that on the Day the young Lady was missing, about Eleven o'Clock in the Forenoon, she was coming through the Forest, and heard a Woman's Voice expostualting with great Eagerness: upon which she drew nearer the Place, and, before she saw the Person, heard the same Voice say, Don't kill me, Uncle, don't kill me; upon which she was greatly terrified, and immediately hearing the Report of a Fire-arm very near she made all the haste she could from the Spot, but could not rest in her Mind, till she had told what had happened. Such was the general Impatience to punish a Man who had murdered his Niece to inherit her Fortune that upon this Evidence he was condemned and executed. About Ten Days after the Execution the young Lady came Home. It appeared, however, that what all the Witnesses had sworn was true, and the Fact was found to be thus circumstanced. The young Lady declared that having previously agreed to go off with the Gentleman that courted her he had given out that he was going a Journey to the North; but that he waited concealed at a little house near the Skirts of the Forest, till the Day appointed which was the Day she disappeared. That he had Horses ready for himself and her; and was attended by two Servants also on Horseback. That as she was walking with her Uncle he reproached her with persisiting in her Resolution to marry a Man of whom he disapproved and after much Altercation, she said with some Heat, If I have set my Heart upon it, if I do not marry him it will be my Death; and don't kill me, Uncle, don't kill me. That just as she had pronounced

		these Words, she heard a Fire-arm discharged very near her at which she started, and immediately afterwards saw a Man come forward from among the Trees, with a Wood-pigeon in his Hand, that he had just shot. That coming near the Place appointed for their Rendezvous, she formed a Pretence to let her Uncle go on before her, and her Suitor being waiting for her with a Horse, she mounted and immediately rode off. That instead of going into the North, they retired to a House, in which he had taken Lodgings, near Windsor, where they were married the same Day, and in about a Week went a Journey of Pleasure to France, from whence when they returned, they first heard of the Misfortune which they had inadvertently brought upon their Uncle. So uncertain is human Testimony, even when the Witnesses are sincere, and so necessary is a cool and dispasstionate Enquiry and Determination, with respect to Crimes that are enormous in the highest Degree, and committed with very possible Aggravation. *Gent. Mag.*
1761		
23	8 April 1761, *Public Ledger or the Daily Register of Commerce and Intelligence*	If the young Woman who went away from her Father and Mother in Westminster on Tuesday Night last, will return to her inconsolable Parents, she shall be received with the utmost Tenderness and Affection. Should any Person presume to harbour her, they will be prosecuted. She is low of Stature, fair Complexion, reddish Hair, full breasted, and inclinable to be fat; had on a grey Poling Gown, long black figures Silk Cloak, and a Hat with Lace round it. Any Person sending an Account of her to Mr SCOTT at the Black Swan in Pasternoster-Row, shall be handsomely rewarded for their Trouble.
24	15 April 1761, *Public Ledger or the Daily Register of Commerce and Intelligence*	A Young Lady, under Twenty Years of Age, of middle Stature, round Face, dark Hair and Black Eyes, a small scar under the Left, esteemed handsome in Person. She had on spotted with red and green, a printed Long Lawn Gown, plain Muslin Apron and Ruffles, black Silk Hat, with a plain black Lace round the Edges, a Pair of white Silk Stockings, black Calinanco Shoes, and Paste Buckles. It is supposed she is either concealed or gone for Scotland, to be married to a fair Man, about 5 foot 7 Inches high, with dark Eyes, ruddy Complexion, about 29 Years of Age. N.B. She was seen in the Park about Two o'Clock, had in her Pocket a Gold [?] Watch, Maker Storr, with a

		Gold Chain; a remarkable beautiful Fan, the swivel set with Diamonds; one set with plaited Hair, set round with Brilliants; one Brilliant Diamond ditto; one ditto with two Hearts united, set with Rubies and Diamonds eight or ten Hoop Rings, set with Diamonds, Rubies, Amethysts Garnets, &c. Whoever can secure the said young Lady, or give Notice where she may be found, at the Bar of Garraway's Coffee-house, in Exchange alley, will be handsomely rewarded for their Trouble; as neither of the Parties are supposed to have much Money. If any of the above Things should already pawned or sold, the Value with be returned by applying as above. If the said young Lady will immediately return to her disconsolate Parents every Thing will be Forgiven and settled to her Satisfaction.
	17 April 1761, *Public Ledger or the Daily Register of Commerce and Intelligence*	This advertisement is reported as a short item in the news section on page 2. The young woman is reported to be 'of family'. On page 3, a further advertisement is published including additional information: DECOYED, or taken away by Force from her Parents. A Young Lady, under Twenty Years of Age, of middle Stature, round Face, dark Hair and Black Eyes, a small scar under the Left Eye, next her Temple, esteemed handsome in Person. She had on a Printed Long Lawn Gown, spotted with red and green, plain Muslin Apron and Ruffles, a plain black Silk Hat, with a plain black Lace round the Edges. She is supposed to be taken away be a fair Man, about 5 feet 6 inches high, with dark Eyes, an Ruddy Complexion, has on his Upper Lip two or three Moles, was dressed in a plain Hat, with a Brown Bob Wig, a Chocolate Coloured Coat, White Silk Waistcoat, Black Knit Breeches, and White Stockings, about 20 Years of Age. N. B. The Young Lady was seen in St. James's Park about Two o'clock, had in her Pocket a Gold chased Watch and Chain, Maker, Storr; a remarkable beautiful Fan, the Swivel set with Diamonds; one Ring with plaited Hair, set round with Brilliants; one Brilliant Diamond ditto; one ditto with two Hearts united, set with Rubies and Diamonds eight or ten Hoop Rings, set with Rubies, Diamonds, Amethysts, &c. Whoever can give Notice where the said young Lady, may be found, at the Bar of Garraway's Coffee-house, shall Receive Fifty Guineas Reward on her Parents recovering her: and if this Advertisement should come to this young Lady's

		Knowledge, it is to be hoped that her usual Sense of Duty and Affection to her Parents, and the Certainty of her own Distress, by absenting herself, will make her break through any Threats or Allurements, by which she may be at present influenced.
25	10 July 1761, *Public Ledger or the Daily Register of Commerce and Intelligence*	A young lady, about 18 years of age, was run away with from a boarding-school a few miles S.W. of this city last Sunday evening, and the French tutoress to the said school went off with her. Two gentlemen in bag-wigs and swords, were seen lurking about the house that evening.
26	12 September 1761, *Public Ledger or the Daily Register of Commerce and Intelligence*	On Thursday night the keepers of two infamous houses in Eagle-court were carried before Saunders Welsh, Esq, who committed one of them to Newgate; the other, being a woman, and an Apothecary testifying she was extremely out of order, the Justice, at the desire of the prosecutor, admitted to bail. Several prostitutes were taken in the said house, one of whom had been taken out of a waggon by one of the said house-keepers but three days before, and debauched; another was but eleven years of age and the all under eighteen.
1780		
27	18-20 January 1780, *General Evening Post (London)*	A caution—A middle aged woman has lately made a practice of going to gentlemens houses at Walworth, Camberwell, and the adjacent villages, after watching the masters out (who she had previously learnt had relations at sea) and informing their spouses of their relations arrival at Wapping, and having brought home a present for them; which though of real value, was but of small bulk, and therefore she advised the sending a female for them, as being less liable to suspicion of the officers than men. What is the design of this villainous trick is yet unknown; however, it is certain, that three young woman have been sent accordingly to the directions, and though the strictest inquiry has been made after them, they have not yet been heard of.
1782		
28	29 November 1782, *Daily Advertiser*, advertisement	YOUNG LADY lost. Whereas a young Lady was forcibly carried away on Thursday Evening the 7th instant, as she was passing through Lincoln's Inn Fields, and has not

		since returned; but as it appears from Letters received from the young Lady that she was not the Person intended to be taken; if the Friends of the other Lady who was to have met the Gentleman will convey, by any secret Method they think proper, such Information as may lead to a Discovery of the Author of so unwarrantable a Proceeding, they would receive (a Tribute not unacceptable) the Heart-felt Gratitude of a disconsolate Family. Direct to Mr. Campbell, No. 3 Great Shire-Lane.
1788		
29	12 February 1788, *Whitehall Evening-Post*	Yesterday Mr. Bearcroft, in the Court of King's Bench, shewed cause against a rule obtained some time since, for a criminal information against Mr. Bowerman and others, for a conspiracy to seduce Miss Fust, an heiress, out of the kingdom for the purpose of marriage. Mr. Bearcroft, with his usual ability, animadverted upon the evidence in support of the rule, the substance of which was, that Miss Fust was not in a capacity of mind to consent to a marriage: that her intellects were so disordered, that she was never able to dress or undress herself: that though she had been long at school, she never could read more than a few passages in Scripture: and that she did not know the nature or meaning of matrimony: that she was taken into France by the contrivance of the defendants, and married to Mr. Bowerman against her will. In opposition to this evidence, Mr Bearcroft stated the purport of the affidavits on the part of the defendants, in which it is sworn, that Mr. Bowerman was acquainted with Miss Fust before the time of the elopement, and that she had expressed a regard for him, and consented to go with him to France; and that her mind was not so weak as it had been represented: that she consented to be married to him and that they were accordingly married, twice in France, once by a Roman Catholic priest, and afterwards by a Protestant clergyman: and that at the time of such marriage Miss Fust was upwards of twenty-two years of age. Mr. Bearcroft contended, that this marriage was lawful, because he said that a marriage solemnized according to the laws of any particular country, was binding everywhere, and supported this opinion by several adjudged cases. He also observed, that there was a suit instituted against Mr. Bowerman in the Ecclesiastical Court to invalidate the marriage in question, and that therefore the information ought not to be granted, till it is known whether the

		marriage is unlawful. As soon as Mr. Bearcroft sat down, the Court observed, that as a process was pending in the Ecclesiastical Court relative to the marriage upon which the present motion was made; it would not be proper to grant an information till the legality of the marriage was determined. The rule was therefore enlarged until next term.
30	10 May 1788, *Baldwin's London Weekly Journal* and the *Whitehall Evening-Post*	*Lewes, May* 5. A strange Circumstance occurred last Week at Brighthelmston, all the Particulars of which we have not as yet learned, though enough has already come to our Knowledge to make human Nature shudder. An elderly Lady was discovered shut up in an Outhouse at the Back of the Steine, in a most miserable and starving Condition, being emaciated almost to a Skeleton for Want of proper Food, and half perished with Cold for Want of Raiment, having no earthly Thing to cover her but an old great Coat. In this wretched Condition was she found, lying on a rotten Sacking-Bottom. The Sufferings of this unfortunate Lady (who is possessed of Property in the Funds, and is a Ward of Chancery) it is feared have been of no short Continuance. The Discovery was made by a female Servant, and the Affair has been since very properly taken up by some humane Gentleman of the Town, highly to their Credit. Note: Also reported in *Walkers Hibernian Magazine*, June 1788, *Historical Chronicle* section adding 'she was found lying on a sacking bottom rotten with the evacuations of nature'. Also reported in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, May 1788 but again slightly different wording 'sacking bottom rotten with her own soil. She, it is said, has money in the funds; and her case has been taken up by persons of humanity, from whom we shall probably learn more'.
31	19 June 1788, *Bath Chronicle*	Saturday last an action for criminal conversation was tried before Lord Kenyon, at Westminster.—Mr Erskine, as counsel for the Plaintiff, stated, that his Client was an Officer who was called abroad on the service of his country, at the beginning of the American war, after having been married six years; and that the defendant, taking the opportunity of the husband's absence, had carried her off and lived with her two years in France; and the case being proved by the witnesses, Lord Kenyon summed up to the Jury in terms that very well vindicate the choice made of him to fill his high station. He said,

		that these injuries, though the highest and the severest that could be offered or suffered, were laughed at and gloried in by many of the present times; but that Courts of Justice were not to bow to corrupt fashions, but to maintain the rights of men, and to set examples of morality, decency, and virtue; that the plaintiff was nothing to blame, having not relinquished the protection of his wife, but had been obliged to leave her unprotected, by the call of his country. He advised the Jury to treat it in the serious light the evidence required; who gave 2000l damages.
32	26-29 July 1788, *Whitehall Evening-Post*	*Reading* July 26 The same day, James Bye was committed to the castle at Oxford, by Richard Hayward, Esq, for a very extraordinary assault on one of Mr Vanderstegen's maid servant on that day, about noon. It appears that he had lived in the family about four months, with the said servant, between two and three years ago, and had taken a liking to her; but as soon as he declared his attachment, he was told not to think of her, and that she would quit the service the next morning, rather than he should leave his place: that very night he behaved in such a manner as gave much alarm to the other servants, and early in the morning he went away, leaving reason to suspect he would make away with himself. Since that time being, as it is supposed, countenanced and deluded by some worthless people, he formed a plan of either forcing the said servant to marry him or to murder her, notwithstanding the only times he had seen her since he left his place were only twice, and those short interviews, in the presence of another person, and obtained by artifice, at both which interviews she candidly told him she continued in the same mind, and could never think of him. However nothing could divert him from his barbarous intention. Knowing the general rules of the family, he took an opportunity when the greater part of them were gone to church, to get into the house, and went in search the poor girl, found her, and endeavoured to force her away with him; a man servant happening fortunately to be in the house, she called to him for assistance, who came and released her, but before she could get out of the room, the wretch produced an horse pistol, and endeavoured to fire it at her: fortunately it only flashed in the pan, as it was full loaded with powder and a single ball. He was secured until Mr. Vanderstegen returned from church. He said nothing could make him happy but the murdering the poor girl, until his commitment was making out; after that

		he was more penitent, and seemed to unite in thinking that the very great interposition of Providence that preserved the poor girl's life was equally kind to him.
33	1-3 January 1788, *Whitehall Evening-Post.* *Bath Chronicle*, 3 January 1788, (no heading); *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser* of 2 January 1788	A HYMENAL PLOT A few days since a conspiracy was formed against a young gentleman at an academy in Chelsea of the name of Dansie, heir to a great fortune, of considerable family connections, but unfortunately of very weak intellects. He became acquainted with an artful woman turned of forty. The youth is no more than eighteen. Ten days ago they seduced him from the school; and detained him privately, of which immediate notice was sent to his father and his other relations, who dispatched people to all parts of the country to discover him, but without effect. An application was made to Sir Sampson Wright on Friday last, to learn whether or not he was secreted in or about town; and it is with pleasure we inform the public, he was on Sunday discovered at a *pensioner's house* a little beyond Greenwich hospital. The woman and others of the party were in the room with him. Monday was the day on which they intended to carry him off and the following plan was to have him adopted. The woman and he were to have embarked in a Scotch vessel for Aberdeen; to disguise him, they had tied up his hair; had provided a livery, brown turned up with scarlet; he was likewise to have been *Othello'd*, having the apparatus ready to black his face, and pass him as a servant. In Aberdeen they designed to have secreted him till he and the woman were married. When the officers discovered him, he was quite overjoyed. His father had gone to Gretna Green supposing they might have taken him thither, and letters were sent to all the sea-port towns.
34	22-24 April 1788, *Whitehall Evening-Post*; *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 24 April 1788.	Yesterday a person belonging to a mad-house in Essex was carried before Alderman Plomer, for assaulting a man in Aldgate-Street, on pretence of his being mad, and treating him in a cruel manner. It appeared on the examination that the prosecutor had lived with a Baronet; that daughter, who had a fortune left her by a relation, fell in love with the prosecutor, and married him unknown to her father; that on his getting knowledge of it he had the prosecutor taken and confined under pretence of being mad; that he was used in an inhuman manner for several months, and he declared to the Alderman that if he had not had a very strong constitution they would have killed him; finding they were going to torment him again, he

		contrived to escape three weeks ago, and last Saturday the prisoner met with him at Aldgate, had not the people assisted him, he should have been dragged away to the mad-house. The prisoner was committed to Wood-street Compter, but gave bail for his appearance to take his trial for the offence, himself in 100l and his sureties in 50l each.
1796		
35	17 October 1796, *Daily Advertiser,* advertisement	WHEREAS Elizabeth Clarke returning from Town was seen in the Lower Street a Quarter before Twelve o'Clock at Noon, to go into Cross Street, Islington, No. 10, but has not yet come Home: Whoever brings her Home shall be satisfied for their Trouble by me. JOHN CLARKE. Oct 1796. Had on a Cotton Gown, dark-brown Cloak, and black Bonnet.
1798		
36	30 March 1798, *Morning Herald*	Last week Miss ELLEN MITCHELL, daugher of H. Mitchell, Esq., of Michelsfort, county of Cork, (who was confined to her bed by sickness, at the time of the outrage) was forciby dragged, and feloniously carried away from her father's house, by a part of armed men, headed by Henry Spread, Gentleman, and aided by his servant, Laurence Hegarty, who struck and abused the said Miss Mitchell, on her resisting, and also struck and abused her mother, on her throwing herself into her arms for protection. The father of the young Lady has offered a reward of five hundred pounds for the apprehension of the said Henry Spread.
37	17 April 1798, *Morning Herald*	THE two young women who left the house of a Lady in Kensington-square on Tuesday last, are (requested?) to return to their friends, who are in the greatest distress. They may depend on being kindly received. It is hoped any person who can give intelligence of them will have the goodness to inform Mr. Greenland, No. 60, East Smithfield.

38	14-17 April 1798, *London Chronicle; Morning Herald* 16 April 1798	A young lady, only 13 years of age, daughter of a Naval Officer absent in the service of his country, was, by a supposed friend of her family, inveigled into a brothel, where she was detained till morning. Overcome by the recollection of her state, she plunged into the canal in the Park, from whence she was rescued at the instant she had reached the brink of a part several fathoms deep. Warrants have been issued for the apprehension of the delinquent.
	17-19 April 1798, *London Chronicle*	*Particulars of the* SEDUCTION *mentioned in our last Paper, p. 366* The offender is a married man, of the name of O____, an ironmonger, living near the Haymarket, who was the intimate friend of the father of the young girl, an Officer in the navy, but now dead. On Friday evening he seduced the girl from her mother's house, under pretence that there was an old acquaintance come to town who wished to see her and take her to some entertainment. They went to the Circus and on returning, the girl frequently observed that she was sure the coachman was going wrong, and frequently expressed her alarms that Mr O. was taking her to some improper place. The coach drove to a low, dirty brothel in Holborn. The girl beseeched him to release her, but in vain, and he told her she might call out but no one would come to her assistance. After treating her most brutally, in the morning he was going home with her, but told her to stop near his house, and he would get some person to accompany her, who would say she had slept the preceding night at a friend's. The girl, however, went to her mother's, to whom she told the story of what had passed. The mother was enraged, and threatened to send her to gaol; but first said she would go and search after O. The child, terrified at what had happened, and overcome with shame and remorse, escaped from her mother's house, and walked to the canal in St. James's Park. As she was about to throw herself into the water, she was perceived by a gentleman walking through the Park who flew to her relief. He expostulated with her on her conduct, and after bursting into a flood of tears, she seemed to shew repentance at the rash act she was about to commit. While the gentleman's back was turned to call for further assistance, the girl had, unperceived, made a plunge into the water, and was with great difficulty saved from being drowned. Diligent search is making after O.

	19 April 1798, *Morning Herald*	The name of the wretch who treated the daughter of a naval officer, his particular friend, with such outrageous brutality, as stated in our Paper on Monday, is Ottey. He is a married man, and keeps an ironmonger's shop in the neighbourhood on the Haymarket. The girl is only thirteen years old. Her father died a few months ago. It was at the Bull and Gate Tavern in Holborn, that the infamous deed was perpetrated. The vile offender has not yet been apprehended.
39	15 June 1798, *Morning Herald*	FIFTY POUNDS REWARD—Missing on Monday Evening, May 8, about Eight o'Clock, on her return from Great George-street, Westminster to Berners-street, Oxford-street, a genteel, well-grown young woman, thirty years of age, five feet five inches high, pale fair complexion, oval face, a very little pitted in small pits with the small pox; Brown hair, turned up behind; long arms, with several moles on them, and a large mole on the left side of her neck, just below the ear, has lost one of her bottom front teeth; had on a dark linen round gown, and jacket, black velvet bonnet with feathers, new, a new black mode cloak, trimmed with fine broad black lace round the capes, and at the ends, green cloth shoes; flat heels; her linen marked A. B. , had a metal watch, in a green shargreen case. A letter was received from her the next day, by penny post, saying she was confined, but not permitted to say by whom, or where. As it is certain she was taken by force, or trepanned, on her way home, any person giving information (who may rely on the strictest secrecy, if required) to Mr Parsons, Baker, No. 61 Great Castle-street, Oxford-market, where she may be found, shall received 50l reward.
	6 September 1798, *Morning Herald*	A young Lady of genteel connections, who had been absent a considerable time from her friends, and for the recovery of whom a reward of fifty pounds had been advertised, returned to her friends a few days since. She states, that on the 16th of April, she was seized by two men near Coventry-street, one of whom blindfolded her, while the other threatened to take her life if she cried out. They took her into a hackney coach and conveyed her to a distant habitation, where she was confined in an apartment underground. There she was informed, that it was the intention of the Gentleman of the House, whose name she could not learn, to make her his wife. She, however, resisted every temptation, and, from the inflexibility of

		her determination, the Gentleman, after a confinement of upwards of four months consented to send her home, observing, that he then found himself too ill to marry. She was immediately blindfolded again, and conveyed in the course of the evening under the care of some men, to a street in the vicinity of Bedford-shire where she was released, and the bandage taken from her eyes.—From the very cautious manner in which the whole business was conducted, there is not at present the least hopes of discovering the parties concerned, the Lady being unable to ascertain even what part of the town she was carried to. She is the daughter of a very respectable farmer in Warwickshire, and was on a visit to her brother in London when forced away. An account of this affair has been given to the Magistrates of the Public Offices, with the view of discovering the offenders.
	18 September 1798, *Morning Herald*	The story of the *blindfolded* young Lady, who was carried away from *Coventry street*, and afterwards *interred* for a *few months*, for the amusement of her *whimsical cham ralo*, owed its miraculous creation to the SUN, in one of its *lunary contests*, from which it has of late been more liable than ever to be *eclipsed!*
	6 September 1798, *London Chronicle*	EXTRAORDINARY STORY. A young lady who absented herself from her friends in April last, returned home on the 25th of August, after an absence of more than four months, and gives the following most extraordinary account: That she was forced into a hackney coach near Charing-cross, by two men, who presented a pistol to her head, and swore that they would shoot her if she made the least noise; then binding a handkerchief over her eyes, conveyed her to a house where she was received by an elderly woman, who treated her with great politeness, told her, that she was brought there by the orders of a gentleman who was resolved to marry her, and who left one hundred pounds to provide her with clothes, &c. which she, however, positively refused to accept of, borrowing some trifling articles of the old woman while her own clothes were washed; that during the whole time of her confinement she saw no person except the old woman and the two men, who came there frequently, and repeatedly mentioned the gentleman, who, notwithstanding, never appeared. On the 25th of August, she said, two men acquainted her the gentleman was so ill, that in all

		probability he would never be able to marry her, therefore had ordered them to restore her to her friends, and give her back the money they had taken from her. On being first brought into the house, they bound a handkerchief over her eyes, led her to the street; where a single horse chaise was in waiting, and in which they placed her, and driving about for near an hour, set her down in Gower-street, and bidding her good night, drove off full speed. She says she has not the smallest idea of what part of the town she was taken to, the windows of the room where she was confined in being barred with iron, and the only prospect being a brick wall. The young lady is the daughter of a very respectable farmer in Warwickshire; and was on a visit to her brother in London when forced away. She is tall, genteel, and rather handsome. The above account has been given to the Magistrates of the Public Offices, with the view of discovering the offenders.
40	8-10 November 1798, *London Chronicle*	A few days since an affecting scene took place in Wapping between a sailor who had been absent for eight years, and met his wife accidentally at the same house they were in; they thought each other dead; what is remarkable, they never cohabited; they are natives of Seven Oaks, and were married in the parish church of St. George in the East, and as they were coming out of church, the friends of this young woman, Mary Smith, hurried her into a coach, and sent her into the country. The young man through grief, entered into the navy; where he has been for eight years, and has saved money enough to put them into business.
41	13-15 November 1798, *London Chronicle*	On the 6th inst. Mr. George Edmund Shuttleworth, son of Mr. Shuttleworth, of Sun Tavern-fields, was forcibly seized by two men in Back-lane St. George's in the East, who having blindfolded and gagged him, dragged him to a place called Botany Bay, near the New Road, where they forced him into a hackney coach, and conveyed him, it is supposed, to some place near Chick-lane, where they confined him 48 hours without any sustenance, except a small piece of bread, and taking from him all his money (except 3s) they conveyed him through several windings into West Smithfield, where they disengaged him, saying he might go and be d----d, for he was not the person they wanted.
1811		

42	31 January 1811, *Caledonian Mercury.*	On Sunday night last, a party of armed ruffians entered the house of Daniel Harley, of Kilmore, and forcibly carried away his daughter. By his examination, sworn before Samuel Cooper, Esq, it appears that Michael Ryan, commonly called Seltig, a notorius highway robber, and Timothy and Cornelius Ryan, his brothers, were principaly concerned, and the only persons he knew. Lieutenant Wayland, of the Ballintemple infantry, having soon after heard of it, took three yeoman with them to the crossroads, near Lachen, in hopes that they might meet the party on their return. In about half an hour, hearing the horses coming at a great rate, he divided his little party two at each side of the road, and desired they should on no account fire, until they were fired at. On their coming up (consisting of five horses, and about six or seven men) he advanced, and desired them in the King's name to stop and surrender themselves, which they instantly answered with three shots at the yeoman; one of the foremost presented a bright blunderbuss at Lieutenant Wayland, so near that the flash threw light on his face, but fortunately burned priming only, or his head would have been blown to atoms – Several shots were fired on both sides, but the yeomen's with more effect, for one of the ruffians dropped off his horse, the others made their escape, the Lieutenant and his party being on foot, and it being about one o'clock in the morning. This wretch, though mortally wounded, got on his knee, and swore he would have a yeoman's life, but was unable to present his blunderbuss, his arm being broken. He would not tell his name and desired he might be thrown into a dyke and the ditch thrown over him, and nothing said about it; he died soon after, and the body was conveyed to Dumdrum [illegible] Ryan of [illegible]hill, flaxdresser and a deserter from Sir Thomas Fitzgerald's regiment, and one of the most determined wicked fellows in the country, and ready to be employed on all such occasions. Vast crowds came to view the body on Monday, which was permitted, in hopes it would have a proper effect on the people. Lord Hawarden, who was at Mr William Cooper's, at Cashel, being sent to early that day, came out, and took a party of the Ballintemple calvalry, with Mr William Cooper, a Magistrate, and scoured the country as far as Cappagh after the runaways, until a later hour that night, and also the next day, but without success – The friends of the deceased having applied to his Lordship for the body, he said he would give it up if the girl was sent home by

		Wednesday, which not being done, his Lordship brought out a guard of the Fermanagh from Cashel, had the body conveyed to Cashel, and buried near the goal.—We hear his Lordship is determined to use every exertion in his power to put a stop to the disgraceful proeedings, at least in the neighbourhood of Dundrum. The cool intrepidity of Lieutenant N. Wayland, in going with so few to attack a party, the number of which he could not tell, but he well knew had plenty of fire arms, and were in the constant habit of using them, was really unexampled, and does hm infinite credit.
	29 January 1811, *Morning Chronicle*	CLONMEL,. JAN 23.—We learn that Ellenor Hurley, who was forcibly carried away from her father's house at Kilmore, near Dundrum, on the night of the 13th by an armed party, one of whom was shot by the Ballintemple Yeomen, has returned safe. Having been obliged to traverse the country for two nights with Ryan or Sclug, the principal of the gang, she declared that she was unable to proceed any further, and on Ryan's proceeding to look for an horse for her conveyance, she took advantage of his absence, and by the darknes of the night to make her escape, and found an asylum in a neighbouring cottage. Two men conveyed her next morning to Mr. Sadleir, of Tipperary, who forwarded her under an escort to Mr. Cooper, of Killenuer, under whose proctection she now is.
43	31 January 1811, *Morning Chronicle*	A Writing-master, of celebrity, *whipped off* a young Lady of fortune from a reputable boarding-school, at Islington, a few days since.
	2 February 1811, *Morning Chronicle*	A *Writing Manster*, in Islington, has contrived to carry off a young Lady scholar, with a fortune of 20,000l. A few days before the elopement, he was asked by her Guardian, "how Miss came on with her writing?" To which the Master drily replied, "Vastly well, Sir, for I shall soon put her into *joining-hand!".*
44	12 February 1811, *Morning Chronicle*	An outrageous instance of what in modern phraseology is termed "abduction", took place not far from Galway, on Saturday night. A young woman of the name of Honora Campbell, the daughter of an industrious man in the neighbourhood, sought protection from an unexpected attempt at the house of Mr. James Molony, of Dooras, in the parish of Feacle. Not intimidated, however, by the great probability of difficulty, about twenty fellows, well armed, attacked her new asylum on the above night, or

		rather between two and three o'clock on Sunday morning, they fired some shots through the parlour windows, and then broke open the front door with sledges, when about fifteen of them entered, having placed a guard on the outside. Threatening Mr. Molony's life in case of resistance, they got admittance into the different chambers of the house by the same summary means, and having discovered the object of their pursuit, they seized her, and forcibly carried her away. In the meantime Mr. Molony hastened to impart the circumstance at Maryfort, the seat of John O'Callaghan, Esq. where the most praiseworthy of activity was immediately evinced in collecting a few of Mr. O'Callaghan's corps, who commencing a spirited pursuit, conducted by one of his sons, (Geo. O'Callaghan Esq.) the ruffians soon found themselves so closely pressed, notwithstanding the extreme severity of the morning, that they abandoned the miserable female, and sought safety in different directions. She was restored to her afflicted friends, and by the laudable exertions of Walter Butler, Esq. of Gregg, county of Galway, Patrick McNamara, Patrick Farrell, and Michael Jones, the ringleaders, were apprehended and lodged in goal on Wednesday last.—(*Cork Advertiser, 5th Feb.)*
45	1 May 1811, *Morning Chronicle,* advertisement	MISSING, a YOUNG LADY, about 17 years of age, with dark hair, very long and plaited, and black eyes; who left her father's house on Monday morning, April 29th, 1811, to go to No. 31, Alfred Place, Bedford-square with an intent to return in an hour and a half, and not having since been heard of, her friends are fully confident she is detained in some place against her will. She was dressed in a white cambric muslin high dress, a pink silk handkerchief, a black velvet bonnet, and had a green silk umbrella with a name engraved on it.—The initials on her clothes are E.T.M. Whoever will give information, or bring her to her disconsolate Parents, shall received FIFTY GUINEAS Reward, on application to the Police Office, Queen-square, Westminster.
46	12 September 1811, *Caledonian Mercury*	BRUTAL VIOLENCE—A circumstance happened in the neighbourhood of Vauxhall, at the recent celebration of a Jewish wedding in Smith's tea-gardens, which calls for inquiry and justice. It seems that a certain nobleman, not distinguished for the morality of his conduct, was in a pleasure-boat with a party of his friends, who had their vessel brought near the shore, in order to witness the

		spectacle, and were particularly struck with the appearance of three young women, who were drawn to the spot by the same motive. The nobleman, and two or three of his party, attempted to force the girls into the boat, but did not succeed, and the latter went to another part of the gardens. They were followed, however, suddenly seized, and carried into the vessel, and the boatman ordered to proceed to Richmond. The violent screams of the girls at length induced the head of the party to order the boat back to Westminster bridge, where two hackney coaches were brought, into each of which one of the young women was placed, and the third was taken into a phaeton by the nobleman himself, but covered in such a manner by a box-coat that she was unable to struggle with him. The girls in the coaches, in spite of all attempts to restrain them, made such a noise as to draw people about them, and, with a desperate effort, one of them escaped, but the other was taken to a house of a certain description in the neighbourhood of Soho; luckily, however, she caught hold of the iron railing at the door, and, by the assistance of the passengers, was enabled to escape. The third girl, hearing that her companions had escaped, threw herself, encumbered as she was, out of the phaeton, and was also rescued by the efforts of the passengers in the street.

Table 3: The abduction of Edward Frank

Date and Newspaper	Report
15-17 October 1800, *Lloyd's Evening Post Star*, 15 October 1800; *Morning Herald*, 21 October 1800; *Oracle and Daily Advertiser*, 22 October 1800; *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 18 October 1800; *Trewman's Exeter Flying Post*, 23 October 1800	On the 9th instant, at Gretna-Green, Edw. Frank, Esq. only son of Bacon Frank, Esq. of Campfall, in the West Riding of Yorkshire, to Miss Mary Frances Sowerby, eldest daughter of Col. James Sowerby, of the Royal Regiment of Artillery.
17 March 1802, *Morning Post and Gazetteer. Caledonian Mercury, The Lancaster Gazetteer: and General Advertiser for Lancashire, Westmoreland, &c.*, 27 March 1802	*A RUNAWAY MARRIAGE.* At the York Assizes, on Saturday, a trial came on which much more than the question of peace or war has, for the last eighteen months, interested the whole county of York, and formed the subject of conversation at every tea table in every female circle. It was a bill of indictment preferred by Bacon Frank, Esq. a very active and valuable magistrate […] against Mr. Hewitt, a gentleman who has made a large fortune in the West Indies […]; and Colonel Sowerby, of the Artillery, an elderly gentleman […] for conspiracy to make Mr. Frank's son elope and marry the daughter of the said Colonel Sowerby. […] the prosecution was opened by Serjeant COCKELL, who stated, that Mr. Bacon Frank is a gentleman of great respectability, possessed of property to the amount of about 6000l. per ann. That his son, at the time of the marriage, wanted about half a year of being of age; that he was a young man of weak intellects, unequal to the regulation of his own conduct, and consequently easily prevailed upon to follow any advice; that an estate of 4000l. per ann. was entailed on his person, while the lady he had married was not possessed of a penny, or of any expectations. She was a fine, sprightly, clever, beautiful girl, rather older than her husband; and looking to her situation, to the character of Mr. Frank, jun. and to his fortune, the Counsel inferred it was not probable she could have married from affection, but that a splendid equipage and handsome stile of living must have been her object. Previous to their running away, the lady's father had asked the consent of Mr. Frank, sen. for his daughter to marry his son, which he peremptorily refused. Notwithstanding this, Mr. Hewitt and

	Colonel Sowerby, conceiving it would be a good match for the girl, set about effecting the marriage, without the father's consent. The parties were in October, 1800, prepared, one night, for elopement; a chaise was got from Ferry bridge, and they set off from Mr. Hewitt's house, for Gretna Green, Mr. Hewitt accompanying them in the chaise, knowing that young Frank was not to be trusted. The Counsel said he should call the post-boys who drove the parties, to prove that young Frank, so far from being in the high spirits which lovers usually display on these occasions, was exceedingly low and dejected; that tears were seen to come from his eyes, and no doubt could remain he was intimidated into the match. They went to Gretna Green, and were married; the father, Col. Sowerby, following, met the parties on their return at Carlisle. […] the Counsel commented at great length; on the enormity of the offence of seducing or forcing a young man under age, or weak intellects, not master of himself, into a marriage, against the will of those who were his natural guardians, and who were best able to guide his conduct. […]. Mr. PARK, Counsel for the defendants, rose, and […] reprobated the prosecution, saying, he would bring forward witnesses to the satisfaction of the Court, and the shame and astonishment of the prosecutor as a father; that he would prove it was a match of affection, […]. He denied that Mr. Frank, jun. was a person of such weak intellects as represented, […]. Since he had been of age he had again married Miss Sowerby according to the forms of the Church of England, and they lived a very happy couple. […]. Mr. PARK, denied that any conspiracy existed, or that the slightest proof of conspiracy had been made out. On Mr. PARK's sitting down, the Judge (ROOKE) suggested the propriety of the prosecutor's consulting with his Counsel, that he might consider of the prudence of withdrawing the prosecution, […]. On consultation, Mr. Frank, sen. thought it advisable to follow the suggestion of the Court, and to abandon the prosecution. The defendants were of course *acquitted* […]. The conduct of Mr. Frank, sen. in bringing forward the prosecution, is much blamed.
18 March 1802, *Morning Chronicle;* *Bury and Norwich Post; or Suffolk, Norfolk, Essex and Cambridge Advertiser,* 24 March 1802 and *Derby*	At the York Assizes, on Saturday, a trial came on which has, for the last eighteen months, interested the whole county of York, and formed the subject of conversation at every tea table in every female circle. It was a bill of indictment preferred by Bacon Frank, Esq. a very active and valuable Magistrate, residing near Doncaster, against Mr. Hewitt, a Gentleman who has made a large fortune in the

Mercury, 25 March 1802, (a shorter summary and does not include the first paragraph about the female circle).	West Indies, but now residing near Doncaster; and Colonel Sowerby, of the Artillery, an elderly gentleman, residing in Doncaster for a conspiracy to make Mr. Frank's on elope and marry the daughter of the said Colonel Sowerby. It was stated by Mr. Serjeant Cockerll for the Plaintiff, that Frank, jun. was a young man of weak intellects, and that he had been ensnared into the marriage with the young lady by the Defendants, and that the object was the great fortune to which he was heir. A number of witnesses, chiefly post-boys and persons on the road to Gretna Green, were called to prove the case; but nothing was made out to establish a conspiracy. Mr. PARK, for the Defendants, reprobated the prosecution in the strongest terms, and represented the conduct of the Defendants as perfectly proper. He denied that young Frank was of weak intellects, and said that the marriage was sufficiently equal, and turned out very happy. Before the Defendants' witnesses were called the prosecution was withdrawn and the Defendants acquitted.
3 April 1802, *Lancaster Gazetteer: and General Advertiser for Lancashire, Westmoreland, &c. Caledonian Mercury*, 8 April 1802	The cause tried lately at York, where a lady was said to have *persuaded* her lover to accompany her to Gretna Green, reminds us of a case somewhat similar, which occurred several years ago:--A young gentleman went to consult Serjeant Maynard (author of a book, entitled, *Law Quibbles*) how he might safely carry off an heiress.—"You cannot do it all with safety", said the Serjeant, "but I'll tell you what you may do; let her mount a horse, and hold the bridle and whip; do you then mount behind her, and you are safe, for *she runs away with you.*"—The Serjeant was, however, sufficiently punished for his quibbling advice, when next day he found it was his own daughter that had run away with his client.

Table 4: The abduction of Mary Pearce

Date and Newspaper	Report
1 September 1803, *Morning Chronicle. Morning Post,* 1 September 1803; *Jackson's Oxford Journal,* 3 September 1803; *Bury and Norwich Post; or, Suffolk, Norfolk, Essex and Cambridge Advertiser,* 7 September 1803	ELOPEMENT.—On Tuesday, Mr. John Locker, formerly an eminent goldsmith, in Dublin, but who has retired from business some years since, attended the Right Honourable the Lord Chancellor at the house of his Secretary, in Lincoln's Inn Fields, when the fact of his running away with a Ward of Chancery, and intermarrying with her, first at Gretna Green, and since that by banns, published in the parish church of St. Luke, Old-street, being established he was forthwith committed to the custody of the Warden of the Fleet, prison; and the bride, together with all others concerned in the said marriage, were directed to attend his Lordship on Friday next, to await his further orders. The lady is not quite twenty years of age; she is entitled to a very handsome fortune: the gentleman is between 60 and 70 years old.
3 December 1803, *Newcastle Courant*	*Nov. 26.* John Lockyer, John Lockyer Wainwright, and Elizabeth Wainwright, were brought up to plead to the matter contained in an information filed *ex officio*, by the Attorney General, charging them with a conspiracy to entice and carry away one Mary Pearce, an illegitimate daughter of Thomas Pearce, Esq. from Teddington, in the county of Middlesex, she being there and then possessed of land and property to the amount of 15,000l, and upwards, and living under the care and protection of John Crutchdale and John Emmett, her guardians; and also with enticing and persuading the said Mary Pearce, she being an infant of 16, to leave the house of the said John Crutchdale and secretly and clandestinely setting off to Gretna Green, where the said John Lockyer caused and procured a solemnization of marriage with the said infant Mary Pearce, and again at the parish church of St Luke's. Old-street with intent to obtain possession of the property of the said Mary Pearce, he being a man of low condition, advanced in years, and well knowing her to be so entitled and possessed of property. The parties pleaded "Not guilty", and withdrew in custody of the warden of the Fleet Prison. John Lockyer, appeared to be the father of John Lockyer Wainwright, and is upwards of 50 years of age: the son's wife we understand to be the *aunt* of the young girl; but by this unaccountable compact the *niece* becomes *mother in law* to her *aunt;* and the father the parent of a son and daughter *twice* as old as his *wife*.

23 February 1804, *Morning Chronicle; Morning Post*, 23 February 1804; *Caledonian Mercury*, 1 March 1804	This article presents the legal arguments in the trial and pronounces the verdict: Guilty.
29 February 1804, *Bury and Norwich Post; or, Suffolk, Norfolk, Essex and Cambridge Advertiser*	*Clandestine Marriage*.—This was an information against John Lockyer, of Teddington, yeoman, and John Lockyer Wainwright and Isabel his wife; and it stated, that, on the 7th of August last, the defendants unlawfully conspired together to entice and inveigle Mary Pearce, an illegitimate daughter of Thomas Pearce, deceased, the said Mary Pearce being a virgin, unmarried, and under the age of 21 years, to wit, of the age of 19 years, and entitled to a personal estate of the value of 15,000*l*. and also being under the guardianship of John Crutchfield and John Emmet. The information further stated, that the object of the conspirators was, to procure Mary Pearce to be married to John Lockyer, he being a person of low and mean condition. That on the 7th of August last, they enticed her away against the will and consent of her guardians. That John Lockyer and Isabel Wainwright went, in the evening of that day, in a post-chaise, to Teddington, where the said Mary Pearce was, and that John Lockyer took her to Gretna Green, where he married her, against the consent of her guardians, and afterwards repeated the marriage ceremony in the parish of St. Luke.—The second count stated, that the young lady had neither father or mother, and described her as an illegitimate child.—The third count repeated the charge, omitting the allegation that the defendant Lockyer was a person of mean condition. After hearing evidence and Counsel on both sides, Lord Ellenborough observed to the Jury, the whole party appeared, from the evidence, to be engaged in the conspiracy, and, if found guilty, would be justly condemned to the punishment due to such an offence.

Appendix B

Note: In each case, the report is taken from the newspaper noted first.

Table 1: Gretna Green: Consent or Force?

No.	Date and Newspaper	Article
	1767	
1	29 April 1767, *Gazetter and New Daily Advertiser*	Sunday morning a couple were married at Gretna Green, whose ages amounted to 145; and, by appearance, the bride was considerbly older than the bridegroom, being so infirm that she required the assistance of two persons to help her in and out of the chaise.
	1773	
2	22 December 1773, *Public Advertiser*	On Tuesday Morning, about One O'Clock, Mr. William Longridge, Brewer in Newburn set out from Stamfordham with Miss Mason, of Fenwick Shield, near that Place, for Gretna-Green. They were both at a Ball for whence they absconded unknown to any of the Company.
	1775	
3	*London Chronicle,* 9 November 1775; *Adam's Weekly Courant,* 14 November 1775	A letter from Penrith, October 31, 1775, says, "This day a humorous adventure happened here;--A young couple from Kendal, being on a matrimonial jaunt to Scotland, were pursued by two men and the guardian of the young lady, who overtook them at Shap, near this town, and commanded the young hero to resign his prize; but they found he was no milksop, for he immediately presented a pistol to the guardian's breast, and threatened to fire if he molested him. Upon which they pursued their journey to this town, but the pursuers having arrived first, had raised a company of men to assist them, and intended to have taken them at the entrance of the town: the lovers apprised of the design, got themselves conveyed to a mill, where they lay hid until midnight, and while the pursuers took their repose, they drove off on the wings of love to the shrine of Hymen, at Gretna-green, and got married.

4	10 November 1775, *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*; *London Evening News*, 7-9 November 1775; *Craftsman or Say's Weekly Journal,* 11 November 1775; *Adam's Weekly Courant*, 14 November 1775	Last week arrived at York from a matrimonial expedition to Gretna Green, Edward Gould, Esq; nephew to Judge Gould, later an Officer in the 4th regiment of foot, and who was wounded in the engagement with the Provincials at Concord, and Lady Barbara Yelverton, only child of the Earl of Sussex. The young lady is but sixteen, of an amiable disposition, and possessed of a fortune of 40,000l.
5	21 November 1775, *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*	On Thursday, the 9th inst. Lieut. K. of the 36th regiment, and Miss K. of Winchester, set off from Salisbury, on a matrimonial expedition, to Gretna green.—It is amazing that Scotland should be so generally execrated as it is, when so many of the English are benefitted and made happy by its law and customs.—The young lady is *almost* sixteen, years old, and when of age will possess a very genteel fortune.
	1776	
6	13-16 April 1776, *St. James's Chronicle or the British Evening Post; Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, 17 April 1776	A Correspondent at Longtown, in Cumberland, informs us, that last Week a young Couple going to Gretna-Green, on a matrimonial Jaunt, the Bride on the Road quarrelling with her Lover, refused to proceed to the Altar of Hymen; which so exasperated the Bridegroom, that he leaped over the highest Part of Longtown Bridge; and had it not been for a Gentleman, luckily present, he must certainly have perished; but he is now, by proper Assistance, in a fair Way of Recovery.
7	18 September 1776, *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser; Daily Advertiser*, 18 September 1776	*Newcastle, Sept* 14. On Thursday a young Lady of Houghton-le-Spring; who has an independent Fortune of 1000 guineas, made an Elopement from that Place with a young Supernumerary of the Excise, on a matrimonial jaunt to Gretna-Green. They had but just set off from Houghton when the young Lady's Mother was informed of the Intention of the Lovers, whom she immediately pursued on Horseback, and came up with them just as they alighted at an Inn near the Westgate in this Town, where she vented her Fury on the young Lady, not only by Threats, but Cuffs, and a total

		Demolition of her Head-Dress; but all to very little Purpose, for the young Couple contrived to slip out of the Room, and turning the Key on the old Mother, kept her close Prisoner, until a Post-Chaise and fresh Horses could be got ready, in which they rode off in triumph.
	1777	
8	7 January 1777, *St James's Chronicle or the British Evening Post* (see no 13 below)	Early in the Morning of Friday Se'nnight Mr, Bew of York, and Miss Brown, (a beautiful and accomplished young Lady, a Native of Stockholm in Sweden) set off on a matrimonial Expedition to the Temple of Hymen at Gretna-Green; the young Lady, not more than 18, discovered a spirit and Resolution on this Occasion that does Honour to her Age and Sex. Her Motive it seems for taking this Step, was to prevent a Sacrifice of her Charms, such indeed as few can boast, to an old Gentleman, her Guardian, who, strange to tell! Had so far mistaken his real Wants, as to become enamoured, even in the Winter of Life, of his blooming Ward, and to whom he was to have been married in a few Days.— *Leeds Journal*
9	8 May 1777, *General Evening Post*	Friday, May 9. Country News. York, May 6. So frequent are Scotch marriages at present, that not less than ten couple have passed through the city of Carlisle from the fourth, within these twelve days, all in carriages, to pay a visit to the shrine at Gretna-green. One couple were attended with three servants in handsome liveries.
	1778	
10	7-9 April 1778, *St James's Chronicle or the British Evening Post*	*Newcastle, April 4.* We hear from Carlisle, that during Divine Service, at St. Mary's Church, on Sunday last, the Congregation were much alarmed by three separate Messages to a Magistrate of that City, who sat in the Centre of them. Many conceived it to be Intelligence of an Invasion of the Enemy; others that War would be declared on their Dismission: But these Fears were soon dispelled after Service, when they learned that it was no more than that the Magistrate's favourite Daughter had gone off to Gretna-Green with a handsome

		young Miller in that Neighbourhood. *Newcastle Chron.*
11	18 July 1778, *Westminster Journal and London Political Miscellany*	Thursday morning the daughter of a nobleman, a young lady about twenty years of age, set off on a matrimonial expedition to Grenta-green, with a Major in the army, from her father's house not far from St. James's-square; she took with her her waiting maid, and the chief part of her clothes, but left her jewels.
12	15-17 September 1778, *St James's Chronicle or the British Evening Post; Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 18 September 1778; *London Evening News*, 15-17 September 1778; *Public Advertiser*, 18 September 1778	*Leeds, Sept.* 15. One Day last Week set out on a matrimonial Jaunt, from Newcastle to Gretna Green, Lieut. Jonson, of the Light Infantry Company of the North-Riding Militia, with Miss Boag, Heiress of the late Wm. Boag, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Esq.
	1779	
13	18-20 November 1779, *St James's Chronicle or the British Evening Post* **See no. 8**	Friday, Nov. 19. Country News. *York, Nov, 16.* On the 5th inst. early in the Monring, Mr. Horsman and Miss Armstead, both of Kirk Deighton, in this County, set off on a Matrimonial Expedition to the Temple of Hymen at Gretna-Green. The young Lady, who is only seventeen, is possessed of a large independent Fortune. Her Motive for taking this Step was to prevent a Sacrifice of her Charms to an old Man of 70, to whom she was to have been marryed shortly, who, with her Father, set off a few Hours after in Pursuit of the young Lovers, but it is imagined would not arrive in Time to prevent their intended Union.—[*York Courant.*]
14	18 December 1779, *Public Ledger*	Last week two couples embarked in two post-chaises at Cockermouth, bound on a matrimonial expedition to Gretna-Green; but the postillions, who either mistook their course, by the large potations they had swallowed in defiance of the weather, or, by way of a joke, steered to the village where the parents of the adventurers lived. The unusual noise occasied by such vehicles in a place out of the common road, alarmed all the

		inhabitants; the parties were recognized and, at the instance of the astonished parents, the *posse* was raised, and the lovers, *per vi et armis*, dislodged and torn asunder. The disappointment cannot be described, but it is likely proper care will be taken to prevent any attempt of the kind in future.
	1780	
15	9-11 May 1780, *St James's Chronicle or the British Evening Post;* *London Evening Post*, 13-16 May 1780	*Leeds, May 9.* On Thursday last returned from a Trip to Gretna-Green, Simon Spence, Esq. of Swainsthwaite, in the North-Riding, with Miss Jackson, of Middleham; a young Lady possessed of a Fortune of 15,000*l*.
16	6-8 July 1780, *St James's Chronicle or the British Evening Post*	Saturday Se'nnight set off from Lancaster, on a matrimonial Expedition for Gretna Green, Mr. Ellerton, Schoolmaster, in Whitcham, Cumberland, and Miss Atkinson, Daughter of Mr. Atkinson, of High Cark, near Cartmell, in Lancashire. The Friends of the young Lady hired two Men and Horses to pursue them. The Adventurers, however, suspecting something of the sort, took bye Roads, and wasted so much Time, that their Pursuers arrived at Gretna Green, and were returning Home; wearied in the fruitless Search, when they were informed at Carlisle, that a Post-Chaise, which passed them between the Bridge and Stanwix, contained the Objects of their Attention. This was really the Case. The Pursuers immediately took a Chaise (their Horses being tired) and driving at full Speed, reached Long Town a few Minutes after the young Couple had stepped into the New Inn. The Alarm was soon given; they absconded through a Back Door; the Knight Errants, who looked as wild as ever their Patron Don Quixote did, rushed upon the Driver, and demaned Miss Atkinson. He knew nothing about her; the whole Village was raised in an Instant, and almost every House in it was searched, but in vain. At Length the Chaise, which had conveyed Mr. Ellerton and the Lady drove away to Gretna Green; the other followed but the Prize was still missing; the Chaise drove empty to the Hymeneal Altar; and while this Manoeuver was practising, the young Couple, with peculiar Adroitness, had walked about fourteen Miles to Ellor-Cleugh in Scotland; where they had been

		quietly married, and returned to Long Town just as the other Parties got back from Gretna. The Plot of this comick Affair now unravelled itself by Degrees, and the Company proceeded very amicably togeher to Bootle, where the new-married Couple halted. Mr Atkinson is now tolerably reconciled to the Match, and will give his Daughter a very genteel Fortune, his Son-in-Law being a very deserving young Man.
1781		
17	5-7 April 1781, *St James's Chronicle or the British Evening Post;* *Morning Herald and Daily Advertiser,* 9 April 1781	*Married.* – A few Days ago, at Gretna-Green, after a Chase of 48 hours, which they dexterously eluded, Mr Thomas Shaw, of Maitland, in Yorkshire, to Miss Batty, of the same Place.
18	22 August 1781, *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser;* *St James's Chronicle or the British Evening Post,* 14-16 August 1781	A few Days ago was married, at Gretna Green, the Honourable. Capain. Shirley, Son of Earl Ferrers, to the Hon. Miss Ward, niece to Lord Dudley, one of the most accomplished Ladies of the age, with a fortune of 15,000*l.*
19	7 August 1781, *London Courant and Westminster Chronicle*; *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser,* 8 August 1781; and 14 August 1781 (with more detail); *Public Advertiser,* 9 August 1781, *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser,* 15 August 1781; *Morning Herald and Daily Advertiser,* 21 September 1781.	LAW INTELLIGENCE A very singular and affecting case is now depending in the Court of Chancery; which was in part argued on Friday last before the Chancellor at Lincoln's-in-hall. One of the guardians of a young lady, whose name was Grierson, from Manchester, and lately at boarding school at Battersea, 16 years old, and a ward of the Court; brought on a suit against a young gentleman of the name of Williamson, a Captain in the navy; for marrying the young lady at Gretna Green, in Scotland; and thereby incurring a contempt, for which he was finally committed to the Fleet Prison: when the sentence was passed, the young lady (who was in Court, standing near her husband, and whose beauty and unaffected modesty captivated the eye at least of every spectator) fainted away, from which she was with difficulty recovered, when she immediately fell into strong fits, in which condition she was carried off; such an unusual picture of distress drew tears from every eye: the Judge on the Bench was observed two or three times to dry his eyes. His answer to the enquiry

		was, "he knew not whether such marriages were agreeable either to the laws of earth or heaven", and therefore referred it to the Master in Chancery for equiry. On Friday evening several of the most eminent Counsel waited on the Lord Chancellor at his house, setting forth the lamentable situation of the young lady, whose life is dispared of; who declared, that he wished most sincerely to relieve the distrest couple, and if they would point out a mode, in which it might be done consistent with the duty of an equitable Judge, he would most willingly adopt the measure. The consequence of this was, an order on Saturday morning that the Captain should be restricted to the rules of the Fleet prison, and that his lady be with him, till a messenger who is sent to Scotland, arrives with an account of the reality of the marriage. Mrs Williamson continues to lie dangerously ill without hopes of recovery. Her Guardians are, by her father's will—her mother, a friend, and an uncle; one of the relations, who is the next heir, in case of the lady's decease before him, is the appellant in this business; the other two Guardians have shewn no aversion to the match, the young officer's character appearing to be irreproachable.
20	15-18 September 1781, *St James's Chronicle or the British Evening Post;Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser,* 18 September 1781	Last Week, at Gretna-Green, J. Andrews, Esq. a Cornet in the 4th Regiment of Dragoons, to Miss Ashley, of Preston, Heiress to an extensive Estate in the Neighbourhood of Whitehaven.
21	30 November 1781, *Public Advertiser*	*Leeds, Nov*. 27. Tuesday Morning a very young Couple arrived at the King's Arms Inn, Carlisle, on their Way for Gretna Green, where they were married that Afternoon, and returned in the Evening to Carlisle. They travelled in a Post-chaise with four Horses, were very liberal to the Drivers and Servants as all were paid in Gold. The Parson got Thirty Guineas for his Fee.
1782		
22	24 May 1782, *Parker's General Advertiser and Morning Intelligencer*	*Leeds, May* 21. On Saturday last passed through Ferrybridge, on a matrimonial trip to Gretna-Green, the Right Hon. The Earl of Westmorland,

		with Miss Child, daughter of Robert Child, Esq; banker in London, a young Lady about 18 years of age, whose fortune will undoubtedly be upwards of half a million.—The Earl gave each postillion a guinea, and the hostler at each stage 10s.6d. The Earl of Westmoreland has very little, if any, property in the county from which he has his title; his estates are in Northamptonshire and Somersetshire.
23	29 October 1782, *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*	Yesterday a very young Lady was seen to pop out of a hackney coach, the blinds of which were up, in Gray's Inn Lane: she went into a post-chaise and four, in which sat a young Officer; it immediately drove off, and there can be little doubt but this was a party to Gretna Green. The chaise had been waiting in the street above two hours. The Lady had on a black habit which ill suited her countenance, for when the young soldier extended his hand to help her into the chaise, she seized it, with an expression of joy in her face, that seemed to set care and mourning at defiance.
24	31 October 1782, *Parker's General Advertiser and Morning Intelligencer*	"A lady and gentleman stopped last night at the George to Gretna Green: they were in their own carriage on which was engraved the letter M; but no one could ascertain their names. The lady was the greatest beauty ever seen in Penrith; and the gentleman to make sure of his prize, prevailed on her to partake of his bed previous to the ceremony of the Gretna God. The parties returned to London. Scarce a day but somebody calls at the George, in this town on the same business."
1783		
25	7 August 1783, *Public Advertiser*; *Morning Herald and Daily Advertiser,* 8 August 1783	On Monday, the 14th ult. set out from Loughborough, for Gretna-Green, in Scotland, upon a matrimonial Expedition, — Mitchell, Esq; of Leek, in Staffordshire, with the agreeable Miss Simpson, of the former Place.—And on Friday the 18th ult. Mr. Blount, an eminent Farmer and Grazier of Rempsten, in Nottinghamshire, set out from Loughborough upon the same Errand, and for the same Place, with Miss Boo[?], a young Lady of Loughborough, possessed of a considerable Fortune.

26	10 September 1783, *Morning Herald and Daily Advertiser*	Monday Miss C____ ____ eloped from her friends in the city, but being missed in a few minutes by her parents, a pursuit was immediately made, and she was found at the door of a young lawyer in Chancery-lane, before he had time to open it. It is supposed their intention was for Gretna Green.
		1784
27	24-27 July 1784, *Whitehall Evening Post (1770)*	The following parties set off lately to Hymen's temple:-- Ensign White, of a marching regiment, to Lisle, in Flanders, with Miss Ann St. Aubyn; Mr White, with Miss Lind, of Hampstead; and Cornet Chambers, so to Sir William, with Miss Rodney, daughter of Lord Rodney. The return of the two last of these happy pairs from Gretna-green is not yet announced.
	28-31 August 1784, *General Evening Post*. Note: The *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* states: [Sir William Chambers] son George (*b*. 1766) married Jane Rodney in 1784, and both became dissipated; by 1808. George was a vagabond.	Two runaway matches in the same family in the course of a few days, are events that seldom occur. The circumstances that have attended the life of our gallant Rodney, are not more singular than those of the younger branches of his [unreadable]. His second son has long been enslaved by the personal and mental charms of Lady Frances Nugent, a daughter of the facetious Earl. Young Rodney, though he had the good fortune to succeed in obtaining the favourable opinion of the Lady, could not possibly make any impression upon the mind of the father. Thus circumstances, he was determined, if he could obtain the Lady's consent, to visit the borders of Scotland. Little persuasion was necessary to induce her to follow the bent of her inclinations, and to Scotland they went, and had that knot tied which we trust nothing but death will separate. While the lovers were in pursuit of the completion to their wishes, the second daughter of Lord Rodney was prevailed on to follow the example of her brother and in a few days after set out upon the same journey, stimulated by the same motives, with Capt. Chalmers of the Guards, son to Sir William Chambers, the celebrated architect. They had not proceeded far upon their journey before they met Mr. Rodney and his Lady returning to town from Gretna Green. The meeting disconcerted both parties not a little, but an

		explanation instantly taking place, the brother declared he would not attempt to interrupt their journey, convinced that Captain Chambers had a sincere affection for his sister, and that a reconciliation with his father would soon take place. What adds to the singularity of this affair is, that the same post that brought Lord Rodney an account of the marriage of his son with Lady F____s N_g__t, likewise brought him the intelligence of his daughters' elopement.
	4 September 1784, *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal*	At Gretna Green, -- Rodney, son of Lord Rodney, to Lady Frances Nugent, a daughter of Earl Nugent: Also Capt. Chambers, of the Guards, son to Sir William Chambers, to the second daughter of Lord Rodney.
		1785
28	12 February 1785, *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*. Also *Public Advertiser,* 12 February 1785; *Morning Herald and Daily Advertiser,* 14 February 1785	The young lady who eloped from Stratford, with a *feather*-merchant, will probably take *wing* to Gretna Green.
29	17 February 1785, *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*	Lord P---rb---gh is said to have lately set out on an expedition for *Gretna Green* with a young Lady of rank and fortune, and of a family not remarkable for the most *exemplary virtue!*
30	2 April 1785, *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser; Public Advertiser*, 2 April 1785	Saturday Se'nnight the only daughter of a respectable innkeeper at Carlisle went off to the hymeneal temple at Gretna Green with a young recruiting Serjeant, where they were married. We are informed that the present victim to the irresistible power of a red coat, is only in her 16th year.
31	10 June 1785, *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*	Monday morning eloped from Greenwich, *Miss Lyne*, daughter of Capt. Lyne, with a *Capt Weston* of the Marines.—Miss L. is about 18 years of age. Capt. W. had just broke off an engagement with a Miss A. a daughter of a Captain in the same corps, now at Chatham. They are gone for Gretna Green.

32	19-21 April 1785, *Whitehall Evening Post (1770)*	Yesterday morning – McD—ld, Esq. set off on a matrimonial excursion, with a lady of fortune in Cleveland-row, to Gretna-green.
33	26 August 1785, *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*	Tuesday an *heiress* of immense fortune set off on a matrimonial excursion to *Gretna Green*, *Jersey*, or to some other happy rendezvous, with her own footman, from her habitation in Pall-mall.
34	7 December 1785, *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*	We are assured from undoubted authority, that the daughter of Lord ----- has the other day taken a trip to Gretna Green with Captain I—gl—n of the Guards. Though only sixteen, she is said to have shewn uncommon art in deceiving her family in this amorous manoeuvre.
	1786	
35	26-28 January 1786, *English Chronicle or Universal Evening Post*; *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, 28 January 1786	The same week, at Gretna Green, Capt. Hooper of the army, to Miss Gambier, daughter of Admiral Gambier, of Bath.
	3 February 1786, *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*	The *elopement* of a certain Admiral's daughter to Gretna Green, has afforded much speculation to the scandalous inquisitions at the West end of the town. Some say, that the *frigate* having deserted her colours, those concerned ought to be tried by a court-martial. Be that as it may, she has stood out to sea with a fair wind. *Love* is the pilot—And as a certain gentleman has hoisted up his broad pendant, she will, at a proper time, return, and ride safely in the *port of matrimony.*
36	8 March 1786, *General Advertiser (1784)*	A few days ago, Thomas Swinton, Esq; and his lady, returned from a matrimonial expedition to Gretna-green. Their ages put together, make just 37 years.
38	22 April 1786, *Morning Herald*	Yesterday a young heiress set off with a young nobleman from Cavendish-square, on a matrimonial excursion to Gretna Green.
39	26 May 1786, *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser;*	A young Lady, whose age was scarcely 16, and whose residence was not far from Hyde Park

	Morning Herald, 26 May 1786; *London Chronicle*, 23 May 1786	Corner, has run off with her mother's footman; the good old Lady, who is a widow, suffers under the deepest distress, not having been able to discover the parties, till the Blacksmith of Gretna Green had riveted them together, and that *consummation*, which lovers so devoutly wish for, had taken place.
40	25 July 1786, *Public Advertiser*	*Lewes, July 24*. About ten days since, a young couple in the neighbourhood of this town (the gentleman an apothecary's son) set out on a matrimonial expedition to Gretna Green, where, immediately on their arrival, the connubial knot was tied; and on Friday last, we hear, they arrived in London on their return home. The lady is now nineteen years old, and on her coming of age will acquire an accomplishment which she at present does not possess, "a fortune of ten thousand pounds!"
	1787	
41	3 April 1787, *Public Advertiser*	A few days ago, we are told, a spark of the *Orpheus* tribe took the route of Scotland with a young lady, his pupil, who is descended of a genteel family, and possessed of a handsome fortune. Soon after their flight was discovered, two gentlemen, relations of the lady, posted off in pursuit of them; but they had not drove many miles when the sly little urchin Cupid laid a stone in their way, which broke the axletrees of their vehicle, and so prevented the lovers from being overtaken. This musical adventurer, therefore, will carry back his *Eurydice*, with much better success than his old Grecian master; though, perhaps, the charms of his lyre may have less power in retaining possession, than the fast-bound fetters of the *Vulcan* of Gretna-green.
42	28 November 1787, *Public Advertiser*	On Saturday last a son of Esculapius *trepanned* a young lady of about eighteen years of age, from the house of her guardian, in a principal town in Berkshire, and immediately set out for Gretna Green. We are assured that this amorous youth has not only ten thousand pounds in view (of which the young lady will be possessed) but is absolutely interested in a very considerable bet, that a gentleman does not make a million of dots before

		he arrives in Scotland. We hope that young *Mercury's* fire will be abated when he returns, to find the fair fugitive is a *ward of Chancery*.
		1788
43	9 February 1788, *Public Advertiser*	The lovely heroine, who is said to have made a matrimonial trip from the last masquerade, is Lady A---- C----; and being of Scottish extraction, it is no wonder that she preferred the rout of Gretna-Green! – Captain Clavering was the blessed companion of her amorous flight! Note: This is Lady Augusta Campbell and Colonel Henry Mordaunt Clavering. Lady Augusta was the daughter of the 5th Duke of Argyll. Other articles state that they married at Bicester in Oxfordshire.
44	23 May 1788, *World (1787)*. *St James's Chronicle or the British Evening Post,* 17-20 May 1788; *Whitehall Evening Post (1770),* 20 – 22 May 1788	GALLANTRY-HERTFORD. About eight o'clock in the evening; on Monday se'nnight, a post-chaise and four, with a gentleman and lady, both young, stopped at *Beechroft's*, the Bell; the lady not stopping for assistance, instantly leaped in at a window into a room; the gentleman as quick ordered fresh horses—Being fair time, the town was full, and a number of rustics assembled round the Inn door; presently afterwards two servants on horseback came up, and observing the mob, conceived the runaways were there. As soon as the servants were seen by the young heroine, she nimbly leaped out of a back window—run up the town – then returned—(in the mean time the servants got roughly handled by the mob) sent for the Mayor, and desired his protection; that her name was C----ts, late of Jennings-Bury; it was her own will to accompany her friend, and therefore hoped to go through the town unmolested; as for the servants, the neither belonged to her, or her guardians, but were those of a gentleman at whose house she had been on a visit, and from whence she had come; in order to make a feint to deceive the enemy (our Hero being of the Guards) a post-chase and four, blinds up, was drove through the town, and in a short time returned back. After a deal of hurly-burly, fearful of being catched, she by stratagem got through the back fields to Balls Hill, where the gallant, accompanied by a friendly young man of the town (who offered his assistance

		to deceive the mob) soon arrived, took her up and set off for the London road. Whether this pair changed their course to Gretna Green, is not known but they were sufficiently out of reach from pursuers.
45	27-29 May 1788, *London Chronicle;* *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, 30 May 1788. A short announcement of the marriage appeared in *Bath Chronicle*, 29 May 1788.	Miss Elizabeth Courtney, daughter of Lord Courtney, eloped on Thursday evening last from her father's house, Grosvenor Square, to Gretna Green, with the second son of the Duke of Beaufort. The particulars are these: – The young runaway, the better to conceal her designs, had bespoken a fine new dress for the Duke of York's Ball on the Friday evening. On the night preceding, Miss Courtney, being engaged with the family at a route, affected indisposition and consequently remained at home. About twelve o'clock at night, she and her maid sallied forth, armed only with the quivers of Cupid. At the end of Duke street a post-chaise was in waiting with the hero in it, and off the two lovers drove. The maid returned, and went to bed. Being rather late in stirring in the morning, she was called by some of her fellow-servants. She then declared, that so far from oversleeping herself, she really had not slept a moment, for that she knew she would be turned off in the course of the day. Then she candidly explained. The hue and cry was raised, but all in vain. The Hon. Miss Courtney is a lady of a very reserved, mind[set], and amiable dispo[sition]. The affection a[.]lasted for some time. It was not from dislike to the match that Lord Courtney was angry at his daughter's elopement; on the contrary, he approved of it. But his Lordship's pride was hurt on discovering some time ago the mutual affection of the young pair to the Duke of Beaufort, who disapproved of it. His Lordship, highly piqued at his daughter having been rejected, he and the family endeavoured to w[..]n the predilection of the young lady, but all in vain.
	29 May 1788, *World (1787)*	An Elopement has taken place between the second Son of the DUKE OF BEAUFORT, and Miss E. COURTNEY. They are supposed to be gone to Gretna-Green, after *something,* which we hope, by

		this time they have found—CONNUBIAL HAPPINESS!
46	3 July 1788, *Bath Chronicle*	*Birmingham, June 30.* A young gentleman from this neighbourhood, and of Worcester college, Oxford, having been happy enough to engage the affections of a young Oxfordshire heiress, of great mental and personal accomplishments, she has this last week eloped with him, and at Gretna Green made the happy youth master of her person and fortune.
47	22 October 1788, *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser; Morning Post and Daily Advertiser,* 22 October 1788; *General Magazine and Impartial Review,* November 1788	Miss Eliz. F_____ge has lately eloped with a Captain B_____d. The Captain before he took Miss off, sent all the family to sleep with a dose of laudanum, which had such an effect on the coachman, who drank plentifully of the punch, that he is dangerously ill. Miss F_____ has been without interruption buckled to her lover by the Gretna-green blacksmith, and will possess, when of age, 8000*l* a year in Northamptonshire. She was to have been married on the day of the morning on which she went off, to the brother of a noble Earl – and every thing but signing the settlement, and repeating the ceremony, was finished. The Captain, however, had the consummation so devoutly wished by the honourable bridegroom, and is now in possession of the treasure at Dublin, where he means to reside until Miss's age counts three times seven.
	1789	
48	17 February 1789, *Star*	Saturday Se'nnight, passed through Lancaster, with great velocity, in a chaise and four, Mr. UNSWORTH and Miss DEWHURST, both of Preston. They reached the hymenial altar, at *Graitney*, without any interruption, and made the usual sacrifice and oblation. The lady is only *fifteen*, quite a beauty, with a large fortune in expectancy. The *devotions* of the *Northern temple* have been less frequent for some weeks past than usual, and the priests (of which there are three) are making daily and fervent orisons for the approach of *May*; in which *inspiration*, experience has taught them to place no small share of confidence.

49	20 March 1789, *Public Advertiser*	A billet put into the hands of a young lady at a public entertainment, by a person who was privy to her design of eloping to Gretna Green that night. N.B. The young lady appeared in one of the riding habits, with a *single cape* laced, and was *chaperoned* by a lady of quality with a *double cape*, who had been lately married to a *Nabob*. In your habit so trim all agog to elope, Your cape so belac'd, 'tis the *Cape of Good Hope*; You might better your match, if your betters you'd ape, You might catch a *Nabob* would you *Double the Cape.*
50	31 March 1789, *Stuart's Star and Evening Advertiser*	*Newcastle, March 28*. Two couple arrived at the King's Arms inn, Carlisle, on Tuesday se'nnight, within twenty minutes of each other; the one in a handsome coach and four, with attendants; the other in a post-chaise and four, on their road to the Hymeneal altar at *Gretna Green*; they both returned to the same inn that night; the ladies seem to be in their teens.
51	21April 1789, *Stuart's Star and Evening Advertiser*	Last week a Lady of fashion, in the neighbourhood of BERKELEY-SQUARE, disappeared, it is supposed on a matrimonial trip to *Gretna-Green.* The lady some time before, when her sister died in childbed, vowed celibacy!
52	29 July 1789, *World (1787); Morning Star*, 30 July 1789	Mr. J_____y, of Crowhall, Northumberland, had the good fortune to carry off the daughter of Sir H. G. L.__dd__ll; and they were speeding on their way to Gretna Green, when unfortunately the elopement was discovered; and being immediately pursued, the young lady was overtaken at Morpeth, and carried back again to her friends. Thus ended the *first Chapter of Matrimony!* And the lady, we suppose, will be obliged *to turn over a new leaf.*
	28–30 July 1789, *Whitehall Evening Post (1770); English Chronicle or Universal Evening Post*, 28-30 July 1789	A Capture has taken place in Northumberland, within these few days; but not of *a vessel*, except that a beautiful young Lady may be called such. Mr. J_____y, of Crow Hall, had the good fortune to carry off the daughter of Sir H. C. Liddell; and they were speeding on their way to Gretna Green,

		when unfortunately the elopement was discovered; and being immediately pursued, the young lady was overtaken at Morpeth, and carried—not to Gretna Green— but back again to her friends.
53	29 August-1 September 1789; *English Chronicle or Universal Evening Post; Morning Post and Daily Advertiser,* 1 September 1789	*For Gretna Green, ho!*—Saturday evening a young Lady, well known in the Fashionable World, eloped with her sweet Philander. They left Westminster about eleven o'clock, and fled "swift as the wings of Love" through the aid of four *chaise* colour nags, to the happy spot.—The Lady seemed to enjoy the sport amazingly!
54	17-19 September 1789, *London Chronicle; Whitehall Evening Post,* 19-22 September 1789	In the course of the last month, there were eight couple joined together according to the rites and ceremonies of Gretna-green: from Oxford, Epsom, York, Ripon, Bedal, Kendal, and other places. Among these were, Mr John Murphy, aged 104 years, to Mrs. Jane Ross, aged 67. The intentions of this amiable pair had been publicly proclaimed seven years ago; but, just as the Gordian knot was ready for tying, the lady demurred: the gentleman had property in Ayrshire, and she talked of a settlement. At length she has consented to their union, in consideration of a douceur of 50*l.*
55	3-5 December 1789, *General Evening Post;* 3-5 December 1789, *London Chronicle*	The Mr. Moleman who signs the Emperor's Edict, prohibiting the circulation of certain pamphlets, &c. in Brussels, was originally an Officer in the army of the Prince of Hesse, and being about eight and twenty years ago with the Hessian troops in England, was quartered in the neighbourhood of Bath. At this place he introduced himself to the acquaintance of a Miss Cooper, of Camberwell, a lady of considerable fortune, and aunt to the young gentleman who some years since rendered himself so remarkable by his amour with Mrs Bayntun. With Miss Cooper Mr. Moleman took a matrimonial trip to Gretna Green; and upon her death, which was some fifteen years ago, he stole a young lady out of a Convent, and with her was in London in 1782, as Secretary of the Imperial Ambassador. His wife was so eminently elegant in her form, and so engaging in her manners, that she was universally spoken of in the circles of fashion as the *fascinating French-woman.*

56	14 December 1789, *World (1787); English Chronicle or Universal Evening Post*, 12-15 December 1789; *London Chronicle,* 12-15 December 1789; *Argus,* 15 December 1789; *Bath Chronicle,* 17 December 1789, and *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal,* 19 December 1789	*TRIP TO GRETNA GREEN.* On Monday last Miss POLLARD of Thornhill, in Yorkshire, a young lady of exquisite beauty and sensibility, with a fortune of *thirty thousand pounds*, eloped to Gretna Green with Mr. ROBERT CLAPHAM, linen-draper, of Dewsbury. Mr. CLAPHAM was on the eve of matrimony to Miss GILL, of Wakefield, and Miss POLLARD to Mr. GILL, brother to Miss GILL. The same day was appointed for both weddings; but, what is melancholy to relate, Mr. and Miss GILL both died, a few days previous to that appointed for solemnization. It was at the funeral of their respective lovers that this present couple first met—a mutual sympathy ensued, and they were married within the month.
	1790	
57	1 January 1790, *Argus*	Another Elopement is said to have taken place near Greenwich.—An Irish fortune-hunter has been so successful as to persuade a *twenty thousand pounder* to be his travelling companion to Gretna Green.
58	25-27 March 1790, *General Evening Post*; *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser,* 27 March 1790; *Whitehall Evening Post,* 27-30 March 1790, and *Diary or Woodfall's Register,* 29 March 1790	The following instance of the vicissitudes of fortune happened a little while ago:--A beautiful young lady, with a considerable fortune, was warmly addressed by one of those gentlemen, distinguished by the name of fortune-hunters. The consent of the lady being obtained, a trip to Gretna Green was resolved on and executed. In less than a year the fortune was spent; and the gentleman having no more occasion for the lady, sent her home to her friends in Worcestershire. Her relations turned their backs upon her; and the poor creature might have been reduced to the lowest ebb of wretchedness, had it not been for the benevolence of a clergyman, who relieved her wants, and invited her to shelter under his hospitable roof. In this interval her husband died, and the clergyman paid his addresses to and married her, but died also very soon after, but not before he had made a will in her favour of a great share of his fortune. Her relations now wished to compromise matters with her; but to avoid them she came to London, and is now on the point of being married to a very opulent merchant, who met

		with her by accident at a public place of amusement.
	26 March 1790, *Public Advertiser*	A young man, of *modern* honour, not very long since made a trip to Gretna-Green with a very beautiful young woman. In less than three months after marriage he sent her to her relations in Worcestershire, without any money, and with very few cloaths. Her relations would not look upon her; a benevolent clergyman, however, took her into his house, and supplied her with every comfort of life. The husband died while she was under this good man's roof. The Clergyman soon married her, but died in about a fortnight afterwards, and left her a genteel competence. Her relations then flocked about her; but she fled away from them to London, and is now on the point of marriage with one of the most opulent merchants in England, who accidentally met with her at a place of public amusement.
59	21 April 1790, *Public Advertiser*; *St James's Chronicle or the British Evening Post,* 17 April 1790	CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE. Saturday the Lord Chancellor committed the Rev. Mr. Stevens to the Fleet prison, for carrying a young lady, of the name of Jefferies to Gretna-green, where he was married to her, she being a ward of the Court of Chancery. It appeared by the affidavits read in Court, that Mr. Stevens paid his addresses to Miss Jefferies by the consent of her father, who entertained a very high opinion of his character, and was desirous that a marriage should take place between them, believing Mr. Stevens to be in every respect worthy of his daughter, notwithstanding he had little or no fortune. The same favourable opinion was entertained of Mr. Stevens by the mother and other relation of Miss Jefferies, all of whom were consenting to the then intended marriage, which would, in all probability, have been consummated, without the journey to Scotland, if her father had lived. After the death of Mr. Jefferies, the father, the young lady became a ward of the Court of Chancery, and an application was made to the Chancellor for the appointment of proper guardians. Mr. Stevens continued to pay his addresses to Miss Jefferies, and by her consent, but without the knowledge of her relations, he took her

		to Gretna-green, where they were married in the customary manner by the *Blacksmith.* They were afterwards married in London, and Mr. Stevens made a suitable settlement upon her. The mother, aunt, and other relations, and friends of the lady, all bore honourable testimony by their affidavits to the character of Mr. Stevens, and deposed that they approved of the marriage, although it was contracted without their privity. The Lord Chancellor said there could be no excuse for a *Clergyman* of the established Church carrying a ward of the Court to Scotland, and there being married by a *Blacksmith.* The protection of the wards of that Court was of great importance. His Lordship, however, paid due attention to the affidavits, which he said might become a subject of future consideration. Were there to be no more wards of the Court, or were it a daughter of my own (said his Lordship) my feeling would be different; but, sensitive to the duties I owe to public justice, and the danger of permitting the orders of the Court to be violated I cannot do less than order the party to be committed. *General Evening Post,* 20-22 April 1790, reported: 'Were there to be no more wards of the Court, or were it a daughter of my own (said his Lordship) my feeling would be different; but, sensitive to the duties I owe to public justice, and the danger of permitting the orders of the Court to be violated I cannot do less than order the party to be committed'.
60	7 May 1790, *World (1787); Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser,* 6 May 1790	KING'S BENCH, *Wednesday, May 5.* ANN HYSLOP, THOMAS WALLACE, HENRY WILSON, and JOHN WILSON, were brought up to receive the judgment of the Court, for a Conspiracy. It appeared, from the report of Mr. Baron THOMPSON, who tried the Cause in Cumberland, that the Defendant, ANN HYLSOP, had contrived to carry away Thomas SEWEl (an old man of seventy-two years of age, and possessed of some little property) to Gretna-Green, and there was married to him, while he was in a state of intoxication; and afterwards, when SEWEl's friends had got him out of her custody, she, with the assistance of

		WALLACE, who is a bailiff, and the two WILSONS, carried him off again, and kept him confined for nine months in WALLACE's house during which time SEWEl's friends did not know where he was; and at last, when a Writ of *Habeas Corpus* was obtained, directing Wallace to deliver up SEWEl, he disobeyed that Writ. After Messrs. PIGGOTT and WOOD were heard on the part of the Defendants, and Messers. ERSKINE and LAW on the part of the Prosecution, the following judgment was passed:- ANN HYSLOP three years imprisonment in Newgate. THOMAS WALLACE two years imprisonment in Newgate, and to be placed in the pillory once during that period. HENRY WILSON, and JOHN WILSON a year's imprisonment in Newgate each.
61	11–13 May 1790, *English Chronicle or Universal Evening Post; Public Advertiser,* 13 May 1790	A young lady lately went off to Gretna Green with a stable boy; but they were overtaken, and the lady brought back. The stable boy, however, was easily comforted, for his only observation was—"*He had had a foine ride i'the' chai for nothing."*
62	11 October 1790, *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*	TRIP TO GRETNA. DEFEATED. ONE of those sprigs of Divinity, of whom the Church, and the Churches' cause have reason to be ashamed, lately heard of a young lady who possessed a handsome fortune in her own disposal. He laid powerful siege to her while she was at the house of a relation in the west end of the town, and carried his point so far, that a trip to Gretna Green was resolved on. The lovers reached St. Alban's to dinner.—Here the young lady, after some reflection, thought it her duty to inform her intended, that although she was *bone fide* possessed of the fortune he might have heard of, yet that she had a guardian in the country, without whose consent she could not dispose of it, not touch it, before she arrived at the age of twenty-four. The parson looked grave, said nothing, but went out of the room, and in less than half an hour was on his way back to London. The lady, who had said all this merely to try him, returned not altogether disappointed—but her *pride* mortified. The parson, hearing afterwards of the contrivance, renewed his addresses, and was, by her brother *–kicked down stairs.*

63	27 October 1790, *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*	Another Ward of Chancery has made a trip to Gretna Green, where she has entered into the holy state of matrimony. The Lady is sixteen, the spouse about four years more. Also reported in *Public Advertiser*, 28 October 1790 where the man is said to be 22.
64	26 November 1790, *Public Advertiser*	A marriage between a Dancing-master and a Miss Hope, of Burnthwaite, near Carlisle, has lately been celebrated at Gretna Green. The enamoured pair had, previous to this, been twice pursued, and violently taken from the foot of the altar.
65	9 December 1790, *Argus*	*AN ELOPEMENT.* A young lady of Beaufort-buildings, like the spirit of *that* wine which her father deals in, has been too *volatile* to be confined within moderate compass; and for fear she might not be provide with a parson at Gretna-green, she has taken care to be accompanied by one all the journey. In truth, the Rv. Mr T_____Y is the happy man on whom the fair fugitive has fixed her hopes. The Divine has, however, *to pray*, for ten thousand *good* reasons, that she may attain the age of twenty-one, of which she wants but four years and a half. A pretended visit to Mrs HARVEY C_____E, afforded the opportunity to make the first step towards the North. This *dutiful* young lady did not forget to write a few lines from Barnet, by way of informing her friends that she had as much impatience to see Scotland as four good horses would allow her.
	10 December 1790, *Morning Chronicle*	GRETNA GREEN. Other places of polite resort are in fashion only at particular seasons; but the attractions of this celebrated spot are equally strong all the year round; and when love rides postilion, damp days and dirty roads are not impediment. A young lady, the daughter of a wine merchant, has just set out on a short excursion to the land of choice, uncontrolled by advice, under the protection of a reverend divine. The fair advocate for the rights of women is just turned of sixteen, and with exemplary duty wrote an account to her father from Barnet, of the glorious cause she had undertaken to assert.

		One argument she summed-up all in; The thing was done, and past recalling; She valu'd now what others thought her; And was—*his most obedient daughter*.
	14 December 1790, *Public Advertiser*	The Lady who went lately with a Clergyman to Gretna Green, though not married according to the forms of the Church, could not be said to want the benefit of clergy. Nor can her friends blame her for going out of the way, since she under the conduct of her *Spiritual Guide*. Miss Edwards, who recently eloped on a matrimonial trip to the Hymeneal Blacksmith at Gretna Green, with a "Son of the Church," enjoys her independence from the will of her godfather, the late Sir George Hay, who bequeathed the residue of his fortune, which was very considerable, to her father. The young lady is but just tuned nineteen; and, it seems, an elegant entertainment, given at the anniversary of her birth day, offered the first opportunity to the lovers for arranging their intended plan:- little doubt, however, can be entertained but, from the merits of both parties, their union will prove a happy one.
	14 December 1790, *Public Advertiser*	A *clerical lover* has, within these few days, eloped with a *Miss G*_____, an heiress of considerable property, both in the *ready*, and in expectation. Gretna Green has yet preserved its charms.
1791		
66	17 February 1791, *London Chronicle; St James's Chronicle or the British Evening Post*	An elopement has taken place in the neighbourhood of Grosvenor-square, John, as he attended his young mistress last Monday in a morning promenade, having persuaded her to accompany him to Scotland, to be there hammered into wedlock on the Reverend Anvil of the coupling Blacksmith of Gretna Green. The lady went off about one o'clock at noon, and her pursuers followed about seven in the afternoon. She is only twelve years of age, and the valet is above thirty! This is the consequence of trusting fashionable children to the care of fashionable footmen.

67	23-25 March 1791, *Lloyd's Eveining Post*	On Sunday arrived at the India Arms, in Gosport, a young Lady and Gentleman from Havre-de-Grace. They had not been long there before two Gentlemen arrived, who appear to be the Guardians of the Lady, and who said she had eloped. They locked her up in a room by herself; but the young Gentleman contrived means to take her off before the Guardians faces the same evening. He hired all the boats on the beach and Gosport, and crossed the water to Portsmouth, where a post-chaise was waiting as a further conveyance.
68	29 March 1791, *World (1787)*	A YOUNG LADY in the neighbourhood of Cavendish-square, on Sunday evening *attempted* to run off with her father's butler. The affair was managed with the greatest caution, and was discovered but a few minutes before the time fixed for their departure, by the young lady's maid, who was to have accompanied her mistress to *Gretna Green*. The Abigail, however, conceiving that she would be better paid for divulging than keeping the secret, informed the father of the plan, and for the present rendered abortive their concerted schemes. What renders this circumstance the more singular, is, that the young lady is but *seventeen* and extremely beautiful, and her gallant upwards of *forty*, and much deformed.
69	13-15 June 1791, *Lloyd's Evening Post*	A recent elopement has taken place, from Shancklin, near Newport, in the Isle of Wight. The Gentleman is said to be a son of Lord S_____, and the young Lady, a Miss W. It is supposed they are gone to Gretna Green.
	15 June 1791, *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*	The son of a Noble Peer has eloped from the Isle of Wight with a young Lady of fifteen. The apprehension in this instance, is, that they are *not* gone to Gretna Green.
70	16-18 August 1791, *St James's Chronicle or the British Evening Post; Morning Post and Daily Advertiser,* 20 August 1791	*Extract of a Letter from Honiton, Devonshire, August 14*. "Last night, about twelve, an elopement took place between a young surgeon of considerable fortune, and a lady of every accomplishment but fortune.—The route, whether to Gretna-Green, or to Jersey, is not known; but they set off in a chaise and four alone. The banns

		had been asked once on Honiton Church, but the excuse of this sudden departure was, the arrival of the guardian to forbid them, the gentleman being a minor.—He was on a visit to Richard Northcote, Esq. whose family were unapprised of the circumstance till the next day.
71	29 September 1791, *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*	A few days since a gentleman of Cornhill (under a pretence of visiting his friends in the North) set off for Gretna-Green, with a young girl of Mile-end, of 20,000*l* fortune.
	1792	
72	18 January 1792, *Morning Chronicle*	*THE MARINES.* It gives us pleasure to see that the services of the subaltern officers of this meritorious corps, but ill requited by their country, seem to be taken into consideration by the Ladies. A young heiress with 50,000*l*. a few days ago threw herself into the arms of one of them, and is by this time firmly *welded* in the matrimonial bond of the Blacksmith of Gretna Green.
73	4-6 January 1792, *Evening Mail; Star,* 6 January 1792; *Public Advertiser,* 7 January 1792	The late elopement of Miss S_____ with Mr. N_____ has been much spoken of. It appears that the young Lady found home rather disagreeable from the severity of her parents towards her, and therefore availed herself of the opportunity of receiving the offer of Mr. N_____, who took her off to Gretna Green, from whence they are just returned. The young Lady is only 17, and has a very handsome fortune;--the Gentleman is much older and has nothing.
74	6 February 1792, *Star*	On Tuesday night the beautiful daughter of a MODERN CROESUS in Broad-street, eloped with her father's first clerk, a young man of respectable family, and excellent character, and was not missed until Saturday morning at breakfast. To make the ROAD to HYMEN as smooth as possible like JESSICA, she did not depart without her CASKETS – on the discovery of which CROESUS became outrageous. Upon application, however, to a very worthy and amiable magistrate, his rage was soothed; and instead of signing an information against the lover for felony, which was his

		intention, he was prevailed upon to be a "*kind indulgent Pappy*", and to write a letter of invitation and forgiveness to Gretna Green, where he was informed they had taken flight to.
75	6 February 1792, *Star*	ELOPEMENT. It is with much concern that we hear of an elopement, which took place on Wednesday morning. The parties were, an officer, and the favourite daughter of a noble Peer, of high Official Rank. It is hoped, that if the connection be reconcilable, forgiveness may follow this seeming neglect of that fond affection with which the young Lady's father has ever treated her.
76	15-17 March 1792, *London Chronicle; Star,* 15 March 1792; *Morning Herald*, 16 March 1792; *Argus of the Constitution,* 16 March 1792; *Lloyds Evening Post*, 16-19 March 1792,	Miss Gee, of Beverley, one of the co-heiresses of the Late Lady Fag, set off on Friday last from her mother's house for Gretna Green, with her cousin, Capt. Hotham. The Lady is somewhat less than eighteen years of age; has a fortune of more than twenty thousand pounds, and beauty distinguished throughout the whole country.
	23 March 1792, *Public Advertiser*	Captain Hotham and Miss Gee, whose elopement from Beverley we lately mentioned, arrived safely at Gretna Green and were married there, on Saturday se'nnight.
	17 April 1792, *Star*	Capt. HOTHAM and his Lady have been married, for the second time, at Hull, by the old form of publication of banns, after their return from Gretna Green.
77	22-24 March 1792, *General Evening Post*; *London Chronicle,* 22-24 March 1792; *Public Advertiser*, 24 March 1792	The daughter of a Colonel, allied to an antient family in Scotland, eloped on Wednesday night, from her father's house in Stratford place, with an officer of that country. The fugitives are supposed to have taken the road for Gretna Green, and it was so long before their flight was discovered, that no pursuit was attempted. The Lady is heiress to a very considerable fortune.
78	16-18 April 1792, *Evening Mail*	Miss MIDGELEY, the sister of Lady GRANTLEY has followed the example of Miss GEE, who lately eloped from the same two with Capt. HOTHAM, in taking the rout to Gretna Green with a Mr. B_____,

		an American Gentleman. The parties have since been married a second time at Beverley, where the young Lady lived. Her fortune is 50,000*l*.
	18 April 1792, *Public Advertiser*	ELOPEMENT of TON. Beverly, from which Captain Hotham lately eloped with the heiress, Miss Gee, has been the scene of another elopement. Miss M_____, the sister of Lady G_____ resided there with her aunt, Mrs. H_____. It was on Friday se'nnight that Mr. B__ ___ an American gentleman, who had lodged some time in the town, and had rendered himself acceptable to Miss _____, called on this lady, and, while he aunt was in the second floor, persuaded her to step from the parlour with him into a post-chaise. No pursuit was attempted, and the couple arrived at Gretna Green in safety, from whence they have returned man and wife. On Sunday last, the bans for their second marriage were published in Beverley church. Miss M_____ is in her seventeenth year, and has accomplishments of mind and person, which might have rendered her valuable, had her fortune been less than it is. But she is the coheiress with Lady G_____ to the property of their father, the late attorney, and has probably not less than fifty thousand pounds. Their mother died lately, within a few months after the marriage of Lady G_____. Mr. B_____ is a Gentleman of respectable character, between thirty and forty years of age. Lord G_____ was upon the point of putting his sister-in-law under the protection of the Court of Chancery, as a ward; when she thus decidedly shewed her preference for the *Court of Hymen!*
	20 April 1792, *World (1787)*	The sister of a titled Lady, who lately entered into the connubial state, is recently returned from Gretna Green, where she went from Yorkshire on a matrimonial trip with an American Gentleman. The Lady is not more than sixteen, and is possessed of a large fortune.
	1 May 1792, *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*	It is a gentleman of the name of BROWN, who attends a certain young Lady to Gretna Green, or wherever else they may seek the *nuptial tye*.

79	6 June 1792, *Morning Herald*	It was the current report yesterday, that Lord B_____, [maugre?] all the advice of his friends, had made an elopement to *Gretna Green* with a Chairman's daughter.—It is strange his Lordship should take so long a trip to deck himself with the silken chains of Hymen, unless he was apprehensive of a prevention of the match by the young lady's parents.
	7 June 1792, *Star; Public Advertiser,* 8 June 1792	ELOPEMENT OF TON. The *sporting* Earl of B_____ is gone off with a Lady, whose name curiosity has not been able to discover, though the following particulars of the affair are certainly known. His Lordship had sent one of his ordinary servants to order dinner for a large party, at Shooter's Hill. A confidential servant followed this man, and directed him to proceed to Barnet, where the one kept a post chaise and four in waiting, while the other went to order *Relays*. His Lordship soon afterwards arrived alone. Sir J_____ L_____ brought, on the same day, to an inn in Piccadilly, a young lady of very fashionable and elegant appearance, whom he escorted in a post-chaise to Barnet, and there delivered to the care of Lord B_____. His Lordship and this Lady immediately set forward for Gretna Green, where they are probably by this time arrived.
	18 June 1792, *Evening Mail*	Of Lord BARRYMORE'S romantic expedition to the Gretna Green blacksmith, and his love epistles to his new *cara sposa*, who is the daughter of one of those HUMAN BURTHEN CARRIERS, well known under the Piazza of Convent Garden, by the appellation of *Christian Ponies*, we may justly say, with one alteration, "Speed the soft intercourse from soul to soul "And waft a sigh from PEERAGE to the POLE
	25 June 1792, *Public Advertiser*	Lord Barrymore's trip to Gretna Green, must have been an *aerial flight*; for at the precise hour he is stated to have been at the *Blacksmith's anvil*, riveting his hymenal fetters, he was seen upon Lady Lade's *Gazebo*, at Taplow, playing at bo-peep with the Hon. Miss Sedan, his intended bride.

80	9 June 1792, *Public Advertiser*	THE ELOPEMENT. Much has been said in the different papers relative to a late elopement from Hackney, but they are not correct [in the parties?]. The Gentlemen is an officer [in the army?] and nephew to the celebrated Samuel Richardson, author of Clarissa, &c. The Naval Officer was a *tried friend* who [assisted?] on the occasion, is pretty well acquainted with naval tactics. They made all the sail they could, *apparently* for Gretna Green, but conjecturing the enemy would pursue the prize towards that place, made a sudden *tack*, and reached London, while the *heavy ships* of the enemy not being near enough to see them, proceeded on their course, till at last not being able to gain any intelligence, gave up the pursuit, and returned to port, not before the parties were married, they being out-asked in the church that very day.
81	12 June 1792, *Public Advertiser*	The couple of some *notoriety*, who lately took an excursion towards the north, are said to have stopped much short of Gretna-green, the Lady's honourable uncle having previously secured for her all that to him seemed necessary, *an annuity!*
82	13-15 June 1792, *Evening Mail*	*A STOCKPORT FRAGMENT.* _____ Elope!! Yes, that she did. Who is she,--what is she,--who's the happy man, --where did they go,--and how did they go? You shall have it all presently. Is she young? Yes. Handsome? No. Well made? No. Deformed? *Ad[unguem?]*. Good-tempered? Mum. Fashionable? No. Has she money? TEN THOUSAND POUNDS!! And pray what is he? As cleaver a *branay weaver* as any in our neighbouring town. She liked him as he was at work,—dropped a hint that his addresses would not be disagreeable, —the hint got to his knowledge, and being unacquainted with the polite ceremonies of modern courtship, but not equal to convey his sentiments by letter,—and resolved on the 10,000*l*.—he went to her, and like Cæser's *veni, vidi, vici*, —he came, he saw, he conquered. To Gretna Green they flew on the wings of love. *Vulcan* was astonished—but being a mercenary dog, he hammered deformity with ten thousand pounds to the athletick vigour of youth in want of a shilling.—And so ends the fragment.

83	26-28 June 1792, *London Chronicle*	On Wednesday last, as a young gentleman, in the neighbourhood of Kindare [?], near Coventry, was taking a morning's walk, attended by a servant, they were met by a lady in a coach and four, who, inviting the gentleman to take an airing with her, the servant took the liberty of mentioning the propriety of going home. As this was done in a tone which indicated a kind of authority in the adviser, the lady, it is said, immediately drew a pistol, threatening him with death if he persisted in his attempt. The consequence was, his leaving them immediately, that they drove off in triumph. No information has since been received of their return, but Gretna Green is supposed to have been the object of their journey.
84	4-6 July 1792, *Lloyd's Evening Post*	*Extract of a Letter from Derby, July 4.* "Sunday se'nnight, Mr. Merryweather, apothecary at Greenhammerton; and Miss Gray of Wilstrop, Yorkshire, set off on a matrimonial expedition to Gretna Green. Few occurrences of this nature ever caused more bustle amongst the inhabitants of York.—The Lovers, on one horse, galloped most furiously through the principal streets of that city, closely pursued by a *quondam* Admirer of the Lady, and another person who rode as furiously, vociferating *"Stop 'em, stop 'em!"* They were stopped near the York Tavern; and one of the pursuers attempted to force the young Lady from her pillion: she, however, threw her arms round the waist of her destined husband, and declared nothing on earth should part them. By this time they were surrounded by several hundred persons, who, "listening to the voice of Love", espoused the cause of the fair Fugitive, and called out for a chaise and four, which were immediately procured from the tavern.—The young Lady made but one step from her horse into the carriage: the Lover followed—waved his hat as a token of gratitude to those who had protected them, and bowled away to the land of *Love* and *Freedom*, amidst the unanimous acclamations of the numerous spectators. The unfortunate pursuers, not being able to procure fresh horses, gave up the chace."

85	12-14 July 1792, *London Chronicle; Star,* 14 July 1792; *General Evening Post,* 12-14 July 1792; *E. Johnson's British Gazette and Sunday Monitor,* 15 July 1792	An elopement for Gretna Green took place from Bromyard in Herefordshire, late on Saturday night last, which has given rise to much conversation. The daughter of a medical gentleman of great practice and fortune, set off on a matrimonial expedition with a Mr. T._____. The young lady's expectations, at the death of her father, and from her mother's jointure, amount to near 30,000*l.*
86	25 October 1792, *World (1787); St James's Chronicle or the British Evening Post,* 23-25 October 1792	Mr. B_____L, an Irishman, whose recommendation (like those of too many who infest the Town, under the denomination of *Fortune-hunters*) consists in a bold address, a handsome person, and a red coat, eloped, last Thursday night, with Miss W____H, a young Lady of large fortune, from the house of her parents in the neighbourhood of St. James's. They had only got as far as the eight mile-stone on the Gretna Green road, when two footpads stopped them, and demanded their money. Mr. B. who knew that cash was at that time of the utmost consequence to him, swore he would give them nothing, and desired the post-boys to drive on. Upon which one of the ruffians held the horses: the other dragged the *Captain* out of the chaise, exercised his cutlass over him in a most inhuman manner; and then rifling his pockets of three twenty pound bank notes, and nine guineas, made off. The poor girl had fainted away, and the post-boys in this emergency, put the wounded man into the chaise, and drove to the first Apothecary's at Barnet. The Doctor was soon raised from his sleep, and after pressing the wounds (which are by no means of a dangerous nature) at the young Lady's particular request, accompanied her home again.
87	22-24 November 1792, *London Chronicle; Morning Chronicle,* 24 November 1792; *Public Advertiser,* 24 November 1792; *World (1787)* 24 November 1792	GRETNA GREEN. On Sunday the 11th inst. was married at Gretna Green, Mr. Richard Harrison, of the Royal Artillery, to Miss Goodfellow, of Cross Hill in Cumberland. The following singular circumstances attended this *union*; William James, a Bombardier of the Royal Artillery, paid his addresses to this young Lady, who is under age, and an heiress. Having obtained her consent, he engaged Mr. Harrison, his friend, to accompany them to Gretna, that he might assist, in case of a rescue being attempted. He placed his *intended*

		bride upon a horse behind the last mentioned, and, mounting another himself, they set off for the Temple of Hymen. Upon the road, they fell in with some company, to whom James could not refrain communicating his successful negotiation with the lady, and the prospect of his approaching happiness. In the mean time the Lady, being, as appears, more anxious for the *completion* of her wishes, urged her conductor to a more speedy flight, and they alighted at Longtown, some time before the intended bridegroom. On his arrival, he found them taking a little refreshment, and, as ill luck would have it, he could not avoid reproaching them for "*leaving him on the road"*. The Lady retorted, pretty warmly, his *want of attention*; the friend of both interfered, and, in short, a violent quarrel ensued; blows were exchanged, and it required the salutary aid of the constable to restore quiet. When the parties had time to recollect themselves, the Lady declared, that, from the specimen she had seen of Mr. James's gallantry, she was determined *not* to marry *him*, but being at the same time resolved not to return home without a husband, she made a surrender of her person and two estates to Mr. Harrison, if he thought proper to accompany her to the place of their first destination. Mr. H. was too much a man of spirit to refuse the challenge; they were instantly upon horseback again, and the *Old Cobler* at Gretna soon made them *one*—and within a very few hours after their first acquaintance.
88	27 November 1792, *Star*	Within these few days a young and daring son of Neptune, bore away from her disconsolate friends, at Kingston, Miss W_____, maiden Lady of *sixty-eight!* Miss was determined on an excursion to Gretna Green, but e're they had reached Dunstable, fatigue and anxious expectation had so far overcome her, that she consented a Bedfordshire Parson should bind them in the *silken* bands of Hymen. The Lady possessed an estate of 1800*l*. per ann. And about 60,000*l*.
1793		
89	23 January 1793, *Morning Herald*	LINCOLN's INN HALL. Yesterday the Lords Commissioners committed two Gentlemen of

		character to the Fleet Prison, for having made free with two young ladies, wards of the Court, and giving them an *hymeneal jaunt* to Gretna Green. Their petitions will be presented to the Lordships, this day.
90	13 March 1793, *Diary or Woodfall's Register*; *London Packet or New Lloyd's Evening Post,* 13-15 March 1793; *True Briton,* 14 March 1793	ELOPEMENT.—Saturday a young Lady of Fashion and Fortune meditated a trip to Gretna Green, with a military Gentleman of rank. The parties were pursued and taken about twelve miles from town, when a scuffle ensued between the brother of the Lady and the Lover, but the latter was overcome by the arrival of the father and servants. The Lady has been secured, but her agitation was so great, that it was thought she would have died while conveying to town. One of the post boys who had penetration enough to discover the object of the lovers, pleaded sickness; but while the parties were preparing to depart, he apprised the father of the business, who rewarded him very liberally by giving him half a crown. As the Lady's fortune depends upon the old Gentleman, who has other children, in respect to pecuniary matters, the Son of Mars will have no reason probably to lament that he has been defeated in the enterprise.
91	22-24 May 1793, *Evening Mail; Sun,* 23 May 1793	On Thursday morning last, GEORGE HUTCHINSON, jun. Esq of Stockton, set off in a chaise and four with Miss CHARLOTTE DAWSON, on a trip to Gretna-green. The lady's fortune is said to be 13,000*l*.
92	26-28 August 1793, *London Packet or New Lloyd's Evening Post; Morning Chronicle,* 29 August 1793	Another young lady in the fashionable circles is said to have just made an unsuccessful attempt to visit *Gretna Green*, with one of her father's *knights of the shoulder knot*. From the frequency of these attachments, even *Hymen* seems to have adopted the modern doctrine of *equality!*
93	12-14 September 1793, *London Chronicle; Sun,* 13 September 1793, *Public Advertiser,* 14 September 1793; *World (1787),* 14 September 1793; *London Packet or New Lloyd's*	On Wednesday morning at one o'clock, Mr. Brichenden, a young Oxonian, son of the Rev. Mr. Brichenden, of Dineder near Hereford, set off with Miss Boot of St. Owne's street, in a chaise and four, on a matrimonial expedition to Gretna-Green. The young lady was not missed till eight o'clock, when Mr. Hutton set off in pursuit of the fugitives;

	Evening Post, 13-16 September 1793	but fortunately for the lovers, he took a different road, and it is expected they will tie the indissoluble knot before Mr. H. arrives at Gretna Green. Mr. B. is of a very respectable family, and every way worthy of the young lady, who when she comes of age, will be in possession of an estate of nine hundred pounds a year. She is sixteen, and a native of Gloucestershire; has resided in Hertford about three years with her mother and step-father, who is an American Loyalist.
94	25 October 1793, *World (1787)* (see no. 133)	*A NEW BEAUX STRATAGEM*! Mr. WARD, of Castle Sowerby, lately led to the Altar of *Hymen*, on Gretna Green, the enchanting Miss BELL, of Kingsmoor, near Carlisle, the envied hope of many languishing wooers.—On the night agreed upon for their Elopement, the impassioned lover set out for Kingsmoor in a chaise, accompanied with a friend. The Reader of sensibility may guess how mortifying must be their disappointment, to find the father previously informed of the young Lady's intention, and determined to prevent her escape.—Every door in the house was locked—but what are the obstructions of doors or windows, to the omnipotent power of Love? The fascinated Amorato contrived, through the intervention of a key hole, to converse with his lovely *Clara* who, solicitous to relieve his pain, informed him, that if he could get a rope and ascend the top of the house, *he might easily draw her up the chimney!* A rope was instantly procured, and the lover, partly assisted by the wings of love and partly by a *peat stack* which stood adjacent to the house, ascended, and presently enlarged the Lady, who retained all her lovely charms, though *horridly besmeared with soot! Cupid* looked down with an approving smile on this novel stratagem; and the indissoluble knot was tied without farther interruption.
95	28 October 1793, *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*	ELOPEMENT.—Last week Miss D_____ daughter to a wealthy West India planter, of Kentish Town, eloped from her father' house, with Mr. J. BRAITHWAITE, on a matrimonial excursion to Gretna Green. The gallant is the gentleman who has made many experiments in the *diving-bell*.

96	9-12 November 1793, *St James's Chronicle or the British Evening Post; Lloyd's Evening Post,* 13-15 November 1793	*Birmingham, Nov.* 11. On Tuesday night about ten o'clock, as Henry Wolseley, Esq. the third son of Sir William Wolseley, Bart. was coming in a chaise and four from Litchfield, he was stopped in Sutton-Lane, just at the entrance upon Erdington Common and about five miles from this town, by three highwaymen, who fired first at the postilion before they told him to stop, which so terrified the boy, that he immediately fell from his horse, though he was not hurt. Two of the villains opened the carriage doors, and threatening Mr. Wolseley's life, took upwards of fifty guineas from his pocket, and out of the chaise a box containing bills to a considerable amount with valuable wearing apparel, some of which was afterwards found in an adjoining land. As they swore they had been waiting for Mr. W. upwards of two hours, it is evident from that, and their taking the box out of the seat of the carriage, that they had received some information of the property he had with him; but the object of is journey forbade his stopping to make any immediate pursuit or enquiry after them, for when Mr. Wolseley met this disagreeable interruption, he was proceeding on a secret expedition to one of the most celebrated and beautiful residences in this neighbourhood, the only daughter of whose liberal possessor he that night carried off to Gretna-Green, at which place it is supposed the young couple have before this been united.
	30 November 1793, *Star*	The Lady who eloped with Captain WOLSELEY, son of Sir WILLIAM WOLSELEY, on a matrimonial trip to Gretna Green, as lately mentioned, is the only daughter of Major HALLIDAY of the Leasowes [?], and not yet seventeen years of age. It was before the Captain reached the place of assignation, that he was robbed of all his money, to the amount of near 400*l*. which it appears was effected at the instigation of the fellow who was sent forward to procure fresh horses; yet neither this disaster, nor the inconvenience it occasioned to the lady, who was kept shivering with cold for two hours, could alter the pulse of the lovers, or effectually impede their progress and they have not soberly returned *one and indivisible*.

1794		
97	3 March 1794, *Morning Advertiser*	Few officers have, we believe, been so successful on the recruiting service as Capt. Wentworth, of the Guards. He last week enlisted into the *hymeneal* corps, the daughter of Sir Tho. Blackett, Bart. with whom he set out on a matrimonial excursion from Leeds to Gretna Green. The lady's personal accomplishments are highly spoken of, her fortune is 3,000*l* a year, and 10,000*l* in cash. The Captain's time will be so fully employed between *love* and *war*, that the persuasions of his friends may perhaps induce him to give the *dangers* of the latter, for the *sweets* of the *former*.
	4-6 March 1794, *Whitehall Evening Post (1770)*	There has been an error in the account of a late trip to Gretna-green.—The parties are Captain Stackpole, of the Guards, nephew of Mr. Stackpole, of Grosvenor-place, and Miss Wentworth, a relative of Sir Thomas Blackett upon whose estate the Lady has a rent charge to the amount of three thousand a year, which is regularly paid at the house of a Banker in London.
	6 March 1794, *Morning Post; Sun,* 6 March 1794	On Saturday Se'nnight, Miss WENTWORTH and Captain STACKPOLE, of the Guards (who has been upon the recruiting service in Leeds for some time), set out from York on a matrimonial trip for Gretna-Green. The lady is daughter to the late Sir THOMAS BLACKETT, Bart. And is possessed of 10,000*l* in cash, and an estate of 3000*l* per ann. The new married couple returned on the Monday.
	12 March 1794, *Morning Post*	Ensign STACKPOLE and his lady, late Miss WENTWORTH, are returned from Gretna Green, and were asked, for the first time, in St. George's Church, on Sunday last.
	24-26 June 1794, *General Evening Post; Morning Post,* 25 June 1794, and *Lloyd's Evening Post,* 23-35 June 1794	The LORD CHANCELLOR, on Saturday, committed WILLIAM STACKPOLE, Esq. to the Fleet, for having made matrimonial jaunt to Gretna Green with Miss BLACKETT, a Ward of the Court of Chancery. Mr WILLIAMS conducted the bridegroom to his apartments, and the Lady took up her abode at the Bell Savage Inn, upon Ludgate-hill.

98	28 March 1794, *Oracle and Public Advertiser*	MATRIMONIAL DISPATCH.—A few days ago a love-sick couple drove through Carlisle to *Gretna-Green*—returned the same evening—and early the next morning the bride was delivered of a *fine boy!*
99	7-9 April 1794, *London Packet or New Lloyd's Evening Post; Star*, 10 April 1794; *Morning Chronicle*, 11 April 1794; *London Chronicle*, 12-15 April 1794	*Elopement.*—On Sunday morning, between the hours of four and five, Lieut. M_____ll, of the Hereford Militia, struck his tent at his headquarters near Oxford-street, and set off by forced marches to Gretna Green, there to enlist under the banners of Hymen, with the fair daughter of General P____t, of Manchester-square. The General pursued the fugitives, with a strong detachment of *light cavalry*, for upwards of three leagues, but could not come up with them.
100	24-26 September 1794, *Lloyd's Evening Post*	Last week a young surgeon of Litchfield set off with a young lady, from a boarding-school near Birmingham, to Gretna Green. The lady's fortune is said to be 40000*l*.
101	24-26 September 1794, *Lloyd's Evening Post; Oracle and Public Advertiser*, 3 October 1794	On Wednesday Se'nnight was married, at Gretna-Green, Mr. Carden, linen-draper of Bristol, to Miss Allanson, of the same city; a young Lady of nineteen, with a fortune of upwards of 30,000*l*.
	1795	
102	2 April 1795, *Star*	A young *Hibernian* last week, carried off to Gretna-Green, from her father's house, in the neighbourhood of Isleworth, the rich and beautiful Miss J_____y.
103	7 May 1795, *Morning Post and Fashionable World*	An accomplished young Lady eloped yesterday evening from her parents' house in the Strand, with an Irish Gentleman of rank in the army. The parties took their route for Gretna-Green.
104	8 July 1795, *Morning Post and Fashionable World*	A Gentleman whose *name* bears a very strong resemblance to an eminent Banker, at Charing-Cross, and to whom he once was Clerk, went off on Friday evening to Gretna-green, with the Daughter of Mr. C. a Banker of equal eminence in the City; the particulars of which are likely to make much noise in the FASHIONABLE WORLD.

105	5-7 October 1795, *Lloyd's Evening Post; Star*, 30 November 1795	Last week passed through Boroughbridge, on a matrimonial jaunt to Gretna-Green. Mr. J. C. Parker, of Hull, accompanied by Miss Goodhand, of Lincoln, whose expected fortune, it is said, is upwards of 10,000*l*.
106	18 December 1795, *Morning Post and Fashionable World*	Miss MARTIN, who lately took a trip to Gretna Green with Mr. Staples, has presented her husband with a fortune of 50,000*l*.
	1796	
107	2-4 March 1796, *London Packet or New Lloyd's Evening Post*	A French Emigrant at Bath has lately prevailed on Miss T____T, a rich west country Heiress, to suffer him to plant the *Tree of Liberty* on her estate; for which purpose, after eluding the vigilance of an old [?], under whose protection she was, they set off for the shop of the famous [ursery?]-man at *Gretna Green.*
	9 March 1796, *Morning Herald*	The Gentleman and Lady who lately set out from Bath on a trip to Gretna Green, are Mr. HOUSOLTIEN, and Miss TRIST, of Totness.
108	14 April 1796, *Star*	MATRIMONIAL DISAPPOINTMENT—A Mr. SLATER, of Newton near Cartmel, Lancashire, aged about 19, left that place on the 30th ult. With a Miss AUSTIN of that neighbourhood, bent on an expedition to Gretna Green. They walked to Kendal, from whence they took a post-chaise, and had got within a mile of the residence of the old matchmaker, when they were overtaken by a person who had been dispatched in pursuit of the fugitives, four hours after they had left Kendal. It has long been said that "*delays are dangerous:"*—whether that "*soft, reluctant, amorous delay,*" glanced at by MILTON, may be so, we know not: but certain it is, the *loitering* of these lovers proved unfortunate to them. The young gentleman, who at the age of 21 will come into the possession of 300*l*. per annum, was safely returned to his parents.
109	11 April 1796, *Oracle and Public Advertiser*	A Gentleman of the name of GLOVER was lately so fortunate of *Gretna green*, to receive from the *Blacksmith* the fair hand of Miss WILLIAMSON, who has also the *good fortune* of 6000*l* a year.

110	21 September 1796, *Morning Post and Fashionable World*	*ELOPEMENT.* MARGATE, SEPT. 16. On Wednesday evening a couple set out from this place on a Hymeneal trip to Gretna Green; the parties are a Miss Gardiner and a Mr. Clerke. The lady is about sixteen, and is reported to be daughter of General Gardiner, now in Corsica. The elopement took place in the evening, after the Lady had been promenading with her mother, who had, it seems, ordered the carriage to be drawn up for the purpose of going home, when Miss adroitly begged permission to take one *more turn*, and she would then go with her: her mother not suspecting anything entered the carriage, not chusing to walk any more, to wait her daughter's return; but, to her great surprize, soon found that she had gone off with the Gentleman in his carriage on a visit to the accommodating Blacksmith. Some of Mr. Clarke's servants and horses are still here, as the groom was yesterday called in by the mother of the young runaway, and questioned as to any news of his master, who replying in the negative, she informed him that she had received a letter, which fully confirmed the route they had taken. A statement of the elopement is given in *Oracle and Public Advertiser,* 22 October 1796, *Whitehall Evening Post,* 22-25 October 1796, *Telegraph,* 25 October 1796
111	10-12 November 1796, *London Chronicle; Morning Post and Fashionable World,* 18 November 1796	*Elopement.* On Monday last Miss S***** second daughter of Mr. S. a Member of the present House of Commons, eloped from her father's house in Marybone, with Lieut. R. of the Royal Navy. As the lady under the will of her grandmother is entitled to an immense fortune, a pursuit was next morning begun, not by land to Gretna Green, for the son of Neptune, on this occasion, preferred his own element to all others, and hoisting the main sail of a large pleasure boat, which he hired for the purpose, was wafted down the Thames the first stage as far as Gravesend. There he was obliged to wait for the tide, and here just as the tide had half flooded, he was overtaken by the lady's brother and some more friends, who had, by the treachery of her maid (who refused to trust her sweet person to the water) discovered the nautical track the

		Lieutenant took. Our hero received them, four in number, politely on board, and having his bark well manned, he weighed anchor standing for a little island called Old Haven, between Gravesend and the Nore, where he put the four gentlemen on shore, and wishing them a good day pursued his voyage with a favourable wind. From Old Haven, the gentlemen did not get away until the Wednesday following, when they were put on board a collier, and arrived in London on Friday about 12 o'clock.
	12 November 1796, *Oracle and Public Advertiser; Bell's, Weekly Messenger,* 13 November 1796	As above with this additional paragraph: The Lieutenant, we suppose, by this time […] happy in a bride, as no doubt he put into some port where licences are not tenaciously adhered to –Perhaps he got to Scotland.
112	18-21 November 1796, *Evening Mail; London Packet or New Lloyd's Evening Post,* 30 November- 2 December 1796	ELOPEMENT.—On Tuesday last a party set out from Worcester, on a matrimonial trip for *Gretna Green*; but forgetting that Love should have wings, the Gentleman very deliberately travelled with a chaise and pair only, accompanied by his intended Lady and his own sister, well loaded with trunks, containing dresses, &c. As soon as the elopement was discovered, a brisk pursuit was made in a hack chaise and four, overtook the tardy lovers at New castle, and brought the Lady back the next day.
1797		
113	5 February 1797, *Bell's Weekly Messenger*	The Alderman's *elder-born,* who set off with his mistress for Gretna Green with so much spirit, lost the *éclat* of a successful denouement, by a *civic* propensity to the *good things* of the *larder*; for he was surprized on the road by the fair one's brother, and stripped of his *Dulcinea,* at the unfortunate moment in which he was *–catering a good* DINNER!—He has, however, gained his point, and the marriage takes place immediately. We understand the young Gentleman is now in Devonshire.
114	6-8 June 1797, *Whitehall Evening Post*	Sir _____ Hannay, of Mochrum, A Scotch Baronet, has, it is said, conducted the beautiful daughter of a

		Diplomatic Marquis on a Hymeneal trip to Gretna Green.
	7-9 June 1797, *Lloyd's Evening Post*	An Irish Knight has carried off the daughter of a Noble Marquis, on an hymeneal trip to Gretna Green. The parties eloped from the house of a lady near Manchester-square, where they met at a rout on Friday evening last.
	7-9 June 1797, *London Packet or New Lloyd's Evening Post*	Sir Samuel Hannay, of Mochrum, is not the Gentleman who has eloped with the daughter of a Noble Marquis: Sir Samuel is at this moment in London. The Gentleman who has set off with the lady for Gretna Green, is an Irish Knight.
	7 June 1797, *True Briton*	Sir _____HANNAY, of Mochrum, a Scotch Baronet, is the happy man who has accompanied the beautiful daughter of a Diplomatic Marquis on a Hymeneal Trip to Gretna Green.
	8-10 June 1797, *London Evening Post*	Sir Samuel Hannay, of Mochrum, is not the Gentleman who has eloped with the Daughter of a Noble Marquis: — Sir Samuel is at this moment in London.- The Baronet who has set off with the Lady for Gretna Green, is from Ireland.
	8-10 June 1797, *Whitehall Evening Post*	We take the earliest opportunity to contradict a statement which has appeared in most of the Papers, that Sir Samuel Hannay, of Mochrum, is the Gentleman who has eloped with the daughter of a Noble Marquis: Sir Samuel is at this moment in London. The Gentleman who has set off with the Lady for Gretna Green, is an Irish Knight.
	9 June 1797, *Morning Post and Fashionable World*	It is Sir _____ HANNAY, a Scotch Baronet, who has carried off to Gretna Green the daughter of a *Diplomatic Marquis*. The parties eloped from a Route near Manchester-square, on Friday evening.
	9 June 1797, *True Briton*	We are authorized to contradict a statement which has appeared in most of the Papers, that Sir SAMUEL Hannay, of Mochrum, is the Gentleman who has eloped with the daughter of a Noble Marquis: — Sir SAMUEL is at this moment in

		London. The Gentleman who has set off with the Lady for Gretna Green, is an Irish Knight.
	10 June 1797, *Oracle and Public Advertiser*	Amongst the late arrivals in Bath is Sir WILLIAM HOMAN, from *Gretna Green*, with his fair prize, the youngest daughter of a NOBLE MARQUIS, whom he carried off from a Ball, on Friday night last, in Portman-square.
	11 June 1797, *Bell's Weekly Messenger*	Amongst the happiest faces in the pump room at Bath, are those of THE TWO RUNAWAYS—Sir William Homan and his bride, from Gretna Green. A little damp however, has fallen on the felicity of the young lady, from the information that the Marchioness, her fond mother, is seriously ill with vexation at her unexpected flight. They slipt out of the Ballroom in the middle of a dance, on pretence that the room was too hot. Her little ladyship was dressed that evening studiously plain; to be less an object of observation in passing though the square to the chaise that waited for her. It is fair ground of consolation to PARENTS of high rank, that as their daughters seem seized with the Epidemic of running away, that they choose for their travelling companions CLERGYMEN and BARONETS, in preference to Gamblers and Footmen. *Gentlemen* of education and fair moral character, may surely be received into any family, however titled, without a blush.
115	26 July 1797, *True Briton; Star*, 27 July 1797; *Craftsman or Say's Weekly Journal*, 29 July 1797	A young and fashionable couple lately eloped from the neighbourhood of Grosvenor-square. Their pursuers took the road to Scotland; but the happy pair disappointed them, by an extraordinary degree of *wisdom* and *patience*: for as their passion was not very *immediate*, they drove to *Brighton*, where they spent a happy fortnight, while their parents were employed in searching for them in the neighbourhood of Gretna Green.
116	11 September 1797, *Courier and Evening Gazette.* Also *Oracle and Public Advertiser*, 11 September 1797	ANOTHER ELOPEMENT has taken place in the Fashionable World—The young Lady is one of the intimates in *Faro's Legion;* and it is supposed that the destination is *Gretna Green.*

117	14-16 September 1797, *London Evening Post; St James's Chronicle or British Evening Post,* 14-16 September 1797; *Lloyd's Evening Post,* 15-18 September 1797; *Bell's Weekly Messenger,* 17 September 1797; *Morning Chronicle,* 18 September 1797; *Morning Post and Fashionable World,* 18 September 1797; *True Briton,* 18 September 1797; *London Chronicle,* 16-19 September 1797; *Star,* 16 September 1797	ELOPEMENT—On Wednesday, the 6th instant, Miss D_____, daughter of a respectable Magistrate for the County of Essex, eloped from her father's house, with Mr. C_____ H_____, son of a Gentleman in one of the Public Offices. At twelve o'clock at noon, the Lady went out of the parlour, telling her mother she was going to dress; but, instead of doing so, went into the garden, got out the back way, crossed a field, and was helped over the pales by two gentlemen, who handed her into a post-chaise, and drove to Epping where Mr. H_____ was waiting in a post chaise and four; so that the Lady had nothing more to do than to step from one chaise to the other, and drive off. They took the road to Gretna Green, and have not since been heard of. Miss D_____ is a very elegant and accomplished young Lady, about twenty years of age and when twenty-one will have an annuity of 900*l* per annum.
118	15-18 September 1797, *Lloyd's Evening Post*	Another elopement took place a few evenings since, which was accompanied with some singular circumstances. The young Lady is the daughter of an Irish Peer, and extremely beautiful. She quitted her mother's house, on the banks of the Thames, at midnight, in a *robe de chamber,* with a coloured handkerchief round her head, and, in that dress, walked, ankle-deep in mud, near three miles, alone to meet her seducer. The Gentleman was also disguised; and the romantic pair set out together, as soon as they met, for *London.* What adds to the enormity of the transaction is, the Gentleman's being a *married man,* whose amiable wife, and two lovely children, are left to lament his folly. The *inamerato* was the intimate *friend* of the young Lady's family!
	1798	
119	10-13 August 1798, *Evening Mail; Lloyd's Evening Post,* 10-13 August 1798; *London Packet or New Lloyd's Evening Post,* 10-13 August 1798; *Morning Post and Gazetteer,*13 August 1798, (except the man's name is	An elopement to Gretna Green last week took place from a boarding-school at Ipswich. The fair fugitive Miss L_____, had nearly attained her 17th year – the gentleman is a Mr. B_____, of Norwich. They were pursued to Cambridge by the Governess.

	given as 'Mr. B____R'); *Oracle and Public Advertiser*, 13 August 1798; *Star*, 13 August 1798; *Times*, 13 August 1798,	
120	17-20 August 1798, *Evening Mail; Morning Post and Gazetteer*, 20 August 1798; *Star*, 21 August 1798; *Mirror of the Times*, 18-25 August 1798; *Lloyd's Evening Post*, 20-22 August 1798	A near relation of a very respectable Bookseller in Bond-street, eloped on Friday with a spark, who it is supposed intended caarying [sic] her to Gretna Green. The Lady, who is only nineteen, and has just returned from boarding-school, is heiress to a considerable property. The lover had two friends with him as guards in the flight; but the Lady's retreat being discovered, a pursuit took place, and they were overtaken at Edgeware, where Miss was made captive by her relations, and brought home, having all the *éclat* of an *elopement*, without any of the bad consequences that sometimes follow such indiscreet matches.
121	3-6 November 1798, *Whitehall Evening Post*	A Miss L_____, a young Lady of sixteen, and of immense fortune, eloped a few days since from a boarding-school, near one of the most fashionable squares, with a footman! It is supposed they are gone to Gretna-Green.
122	26 December 1798, *Oracle and Daily Advertiser*	Lord LOUGHBOROUGH loses more of his *eleves* [sic] than any Nobleman in *England.* Another *Ward in Chancery* has recently eloped to *Gretna Green.*
	1799	
123	24 April 1799, *Courier and Evening Gazette; Oracle and Daily Advertiser*, 25 April 1799	A young Lady of considerable fortune, and who resided not an hundred miles from a watering-place East of this town, it is said, on yesterday se'nnight eloped with a favourite domestic, on her route for Gretna Green. On being missed, the fair fugitive was pursued by some of her relations, but as she had gained the start of them twelve hours it can be scarcely doubted but she continued her course uninterrupted on the wings of love, until she arrived at the summit of her wishes.
	28 April 1799, *Observer*	A young Lady, of large fortune, last week ran off from a watering-place in Sussex with her footman,

		and arrived at Gretna Green some hours before their pursuers.
124	22-24 May 1799, *Evening Mail; Whitehall Evening Post (1770),* 23-25 May 1799; *E. Johnson's British Gazette and Sunday Monitor,* 26 May 1799	ELOPEMENT. A young Lady, whose heart seems to have been of the *muslin* kind, at once tender and inflammable, eloped, on Thursday night, from the fashionable end of the town with her *Guardian*. The great disparity between *seventeen* and *fifty* induced her mother, with a view to obstruct the matrimonial propensities of the love-sick fair, to doom her to solitary confinement in a penitentiary bed chamber, on the third floor. Thither the eyes of her loving Argus followed her. A faithful servant was the confident of his armour, and to his sagacity was consigned the arduous task of liberating the fair captive.—Never was a commission more punctually executed. A tree, planted by love, raised its lofty branches almost close to the chamber window; to which, with their friendly aid, *John* mounted at midnight, and the adventurous damsel, consigning herself to his care, descended in safety. *January* no doubt, was at the foot of the tree when the lovely *May* was in its boughs. Alas! No such thing, he was snoring in bed. The faithful 'Squire, however, soon awoke him to his good fortune; and a chaise being in readiness, they immediately set out for Gretna Green, where the nuptial Vulcan has probably, ere this, clinched those chains which nothing but death or Doctors' Commons can destroy. The Gentleman is a Naval Officer; the young Lady, when of age, will be entitled to a fortune of 15,000*l*.
125	13 July 1799, *Oracle and Daily Gazette; Star,* 12 July 1799; *Times,* 12 July 1799	ELOPEMENT.—A young Lady of *Southampton,* entitled to 500l per Annum, is gone on a *secret expedition* with an Officer of the 17th Light Dragoons. *Gretna Green,* it is supposed, is the place of their destination, and that they have private business […] with the *Clerical Blacksmith.*
126	28 August 1799, *True Briton*	ELOPEMENT.—On Thursday last a young Lady eloped from Kensington, with an Hibernian youth, who brought her to his apartments in Brook street, where not having money enough to discharge the post-boy, some words ensued; in consequence of which, the boy went back to inform the Lady's

		friends of the circumstance, who arrived about five o'clock on Friday morning, when a regular siege commenced. About ten, her brother found means to enter the house, and finding the Irishman had made his escape the back way, he conducted her (to her no small mortification) through the crowd to a hackney coach, which was waiting. We understand it was the intention of the gallant to have proceeded to Gretna Green, as soon as he could have procured the necessary supplies.
127	9 December 1799, *Oracle and Daily Advertiser;* 17 December 1799	MR. W. HARRIS, a young Farmer of *K[…]* near *Bury*, set off a few days since with Miss HOWARD, 16 years old, entitled to a good fortune, to *Gretna Green.*
		1800
128	3-6 October 1800, *London Packet or New Lloyd's Evening Post*; *Oracle and Daily Advertiser,* 3 October 1800	A *Filly of Fortune* has run off with a *Black Leg,* from Newmarket, for Gretna Green. It is probable her cash will be lost on the very same spot from whence she set off on so unprofitable a race.
		1801
129	10 January 1801, *Jackson's Oxford Journal*; *York Herald,* 10 January 1801; *Morning Post and Gazetteer,* 5 January 1801,	Ensign M_____, of the 23rd regiment, quartered at Bridgwater, lately eloped to Gretna Green with the daughter of his Colonel; on Monday last they returned, when the bridegroom was put under arrest for absenting himself from his corps without leave, for which he is to be tried by a Court Martial.
130	23 February 1801, *Aberdeen Journal*	Married lately at Gretna Green, Mr John Ferguson, to Mrs Jackson, both of Arthuret parish. This happy lady, it seems, had *two strings to her bow*; for at the time of her elopement another young man was actually in possession of a licence to marry her; and when he waited upon her to accompany him to the Hymeneal altar, she informed him, by an introduction to her husband, that he was – *too late.*
131	31 October 1801, *Lancaster Gazetteer and General Advertiser for Lancashire, Westmoreland, &c.*	The present season augurs favourably for the *wedlock-smiths* at *Gretna Green;* no less than four couple have been *riveted* together at the Hymeneal temple at that place within these few days. One

		couple were from Martinique, and were accompanied by four gentlemen of the same place. They spoke English so indifferently, that it was with difficulty they could make themselves understood on the road; but when they reached the place of destination, they produced before Mr. Long (by whom the ceremony was performed) an infallible interpreter (*thirty guineas*) and the connubial chain was forged without the least loss of time.
	1803	
132	23 May 1803, *Hampshire Telegraph and Portsmouth Gazette*	On Tuesday morning a runaway pair passed through Stamford, on their way to Gretna-green. The gentleman was extremely anxious and uncommonly liberal, which led the town's people to auger favourable for the weight of the lady's purse. It appeared they were only twelve hours in reaching Grantham; which is 110 miles distant from the metropolis.
133	30 December 1803, *Morning Chronicle* (see no. 94).	GRETNA-GREEN TRIP.—Lately a marriage was celebrated at Gretna-Green between Mr._____, of Crookholm, near Brampton, and Miss _____, of Scarr, in the parish of Irthington, attended with the following peculiar circumstances:--As the bridegroom, being a minor, had not yet put on the *toga virilise*, a licence for the marriage could not be procured without his father's consent; but as his consent could not, by the most importunate solicitation, be obtained, filial obedience, after a short struggle, gave way to the force of love, and the enamoured youth resolved, in spite of every obstacle opposed by parental authority, to be united to the object of his affections. The old gentleman being informed of his intentions, took the only method which he thought could prevent their execution, by circumscribing the liberty of his son within the limits of his own apartment. But bolts and locks are ineffectual security against the potency of love; the imprisoned lover ascends the chimney, reaches the top, and on the wings of love flies to the habitation of his fair damsel, who, through a thick incrustation of dirt and soot, could not recognize the features of her adventurous admirer, till his native complexion was restored by

		an application of sope and water. After mutual endearments and a soft interchange of sighs, the two lovers set forward to Gretna-green, where they immediately purchased the services of one of those useful members of society who remove the anxieties of love sick couples.
134	7 September 1803, *Bury and Norwich Post; or, Suffolk, Norfolk, Essex and Cambridge Advertiser; Derby Mercury,* 8 September 1803	A double elopement took place from Northallerton a few days since. When two young ladies, sisters, threw themselves into the gallant arms of two Military Officers, with whom they set off post on a matrimonial expedition for Gretna Green.
	1804	
135	23 January 1804, *The Morning Post*	*MRS. LEE*. This Lady, who is the topic of general conversation is a natural daughter of the late Lord Le DESPENCER. Her mother's name was DASHWOOD, Lord Le DESPENCER on his death bed bequeathed to Mrs. LEE, the Miss DASHWOOD, 70,000*l*. to be paid into her own hands when she came of age. Mrs. LEE was then an infant. The money was placed in the Funds to accumulate until the period of her taking possession. When in her fifteenth year she was courted by many young men of fashion, and she was then the Belle of Bath, being the toast in every gay party. Among her suitors were Lord SAY and SELE, and a nephew of the Earl of MACCLESFIELD; she consented to be united to the latter Gentleman. An equipage suitable to the Lady's fortune was ordered, the wedding clothes were provided, the ring bought, and even the wedding dinner ordered; but the night previous the Lady changed her mind, and would not have him.—Meeting a short time afterwards Mr. LEE, the elegance of his person and his gentlemanly manners made so deep an impression, that she agreed to elope with him for Gretna Green, which plan was carried into execution in a few days, the Lady leaving behind her a numerous train of passionate admirers. The marriage with Mr. LEE took place in 1792, and about nine months after, the parties were separated, owing it is said, to use a fashionable phrase, the *whimmy* disposition of the lady. On the separation taking place she relinquished a part of her fortune in favour of her

		husband. The recent transaction seems the more extraordinary the more it is considered. That a Lady, surrounded by her servants, and in the heart of the metropolis, should be forced from her house, in opposition to her wishes, is a matter almost incredible; she has, however made attestation to the charge; and if the Jury to whom the question will be referred, give credit to her testimony, supported as it is by that of her maid, the prisoners are liable to the penalty of death. The circumstances of Mrs. LEE having returned to the apartments of these Gentlemen, after being apprised of their purpose, and when, either by her orders for assistance, or by leaving the house, she might have assured her safety; of her consenting to receive the embraces of Mr. LAUDEN GORDON, at Tetsworth, when by the slightest communication of her condition, it is at least probable she might have avoided the sacrifice; and after this repeated violence, her accompanying him to Gloucester, will naturally inspire doubts as to the criminality of the gentlemen to the full extent of the charge. The *dream* to which Mrs. LEE alludes […].
	28 January 1804, *Jackson's Oxford Journal*	As above but without the dream. And with additional paragraphs about a young man determined to prove her innocence.
	28 January 1804, *York Herald*	On Friday week a long examination took place, when Mrs Lee's deposition was taken, and some very curious and singular circumstances came to light. Both the Mr. Gordons were committed for further examination. [The above paragraphs are then repeated but without the dream paragraphs]. All the mystery of enigma, respecting Mrs. Lee, is completely done away, by the simple statement of the fact that she is absolutely *insane*. This was long since suspected by her husband, who took her in consequence into Wales, to try whether quietude, pure air, and calm converse could effect her restoration. The effort was tried for some time without effect. A separation was the natural consequence of its failure.
	25 June 1804, *Bury and Norwich Post; or, Suffolk,*	As the first paragraphs above but with the surname spelled 'Leigh' and without the description of the

	Norfolk, Essex and Cambridge Advertiser	dream. The following paragraph is included at the end: Mrs Leigh, in her examination on Friday, at Bow-street, declined to state her ridiculous dream upon oath before the Magistrates, which Mr. Gordon has since solved and resolved for her, most likely to the lady's satisfaction.
	30 June 1804, *Hampshire Telegraph and Sussex Chronicle etc.*	MRS. LEE. We are almost tempted to apologize to our readers, for having entered so much into the detail of this most vapid and *jejune* adventure; we shall endeavour to atone for the same by future brevity upon the subject. On Saturday the two Messrs. Gordons underwent an examination of four hours, at the Bow-street Police Office. Mrs. Lee's deposition being privately taken; the substance of which was, that it was under force and corporal fear, that she was taken from her house, (in the midst of her servants!) that they changed horses twice, that they supped about midnight at Tytsworth, and that (under force also) she suffered Mr. Lauden Gordon to sleep with her, and consented to proceed with him to Gloucester, (the other brother having proceeded to London, where he was taken,) when the Bow-street officers arrived with the warrant, &c. The general bent of opinion seems to be unfavourable to the Lady; for if she really wished to leave her house with either of the parties, she took an unaccountable mode of accomplishing her purpose. It does not appear that the person who accompanied her had any particular destiny in view, and it is strange indeed that he was not supplied with money for the common expenses of the journey. The memorable history of Betty Canning hardly equals the inconsistencies of this enigmatical adventure. [Mrs. Lee is a natural …in favour of her husband]. In addition to the dull verbosity of narrative and depositions in this case, the public prints have added the detail of a dream, which Mrs. L. recited at length, as the foundation and *primum mobile* of her extraordinary conduct. We shall dismiss the subject, unless called upon to report the result of judicial proceedings upon it, should any take place.
136	17 September 1804, *Morning Chronicle; Bury*	An attempt at elopement to Gretna Green has lately given rise to a good deal of conversation at

	and Norwich Post; or, Suffolk, Norfolk, Essex and Cambridge Advertiser, 19 September 1804	Preston. A young lady of that place, possessed of considerable fortune, had fixed her affections on a gentleman who unfortunately was not at all agreeable to her father. He accordingly took every means to prevent any intercourse betwixt the lovers. All his precautions were, however, ineffectual, for in spite of his vigilance they contrived to appoint a day for setting off for Gretna Green to seal their union in a manner too close for the old gentleman to dissolve. The young lady's departure was soon discovered, and the fond pair were immediately pursued. They were easily traced, as they took no precautions for concealment, conceiving, perhaps, that the less unembarrassed their appearance was the less liable they would be to suspicion. Their route to Lancaster was discovered, and from thence to Burton and Kendal, where the enraged father overtook them. There a curious scene took place. The father conducted himself with the utmost violence, the daughter declared her resolution to have no other husband but the one of her choice, and the lover gallantly protested that he would protect his fair fugitive against all perils. From words the father and lover almost proceeded to blow, till at last the peace officers interfered and the young lady was prevailed on to return to her former residence to await her father's determination in his cooler moments.
137	21 September 1804, *Morning Post*	A young couple, not long since returned from Gretna Green, are likely to find, from their reception at home, that the Clerical Smith's […] *galling* one.
138	3 November 1804, *Morning Post*	The fashionable Mr. S_____ passed through York on Saturday last, in company with the lovely and accomplished Miss N _____. Conjecture has been tolerably right as to the purpose of their journey to the land of matrimonial liberty, and the paradise of impatient minors: in a word, it was to do homage at that celebrated altar of Hymen, the far-famed Gretna Green.
139	1 December 1804, *Lancaster Gazetteer: and*	A young lady of considerable fortune has within these few days made an elopement from her friends

	General Advertiser for Lancashire, Westmoreland, &c	in the city, on a visit to the accommodating Blacksmith of Gretna Green. The happy companion of her journey is a young fellow who is just out of his apprenticeship, which he served to a *Goldbeater*.
	1805	
140	12 April 1805, *Morning Post*	A young Jewess of fortune eloped from the neighbourhood of London a few days since with a Capt. W. of the Navy. They are supposed to have proceeded to Gretna Green, there to be revitted on the *matrimonial anvil* of the *Blacksmith*.
141	11 May 1805, *Ipswich Journal; Jackson's Oxford Journal* 18 May 1805; *Lancaster Gazetteer and General Advertiser for Lancashire, Westmoreland, &c* 11 May 1805; *Newcastle Courant* 11 May 1805; *York Herald,* 11 May 1805; *Aberdeen Journal,* 15 May 1805; *Hull Packet,* 14 May 1805; *Bury and Norwich Post; or, Suffolk, Norfolk, Essex and Cambridge Advertiser,* 15 May 1805	Tuesday se'nnight passed through Carlisle, Stephen Phillips, Esq. with Lord Petre's daughter, for Gretna Green, at which place they were married the same evening, after eluding every inquiry made after them by the young lady's parents. What renders the affair more surprising is that a person has been on the watch at Gretna for some time for the lovers; but wearied out at length he departed a day or two before the young couple arrived. [A simple marriage announcement appeared in the *Morning Post,* 7 May 1805, and *Derby Mercury,* 9 May 1805].
142	27 July 1805, *Lancaster Gazetteer: and General Advertiser for Lancashire, Westmoreland, &c.* Also *Derby Mercury,* 1 August 1805	*Scotch Wedding*—Old Joe had a *golden* job on Friday the 19th inst. a couple, all the way from *Suffolk*, having made a pilgrimage to the Hymeneal shrine at Graitney Green—The gentleman, from his appearance, was verging upon *threescore years and ten*, and of bulk and figure which might represent a *Falstaff* without *stuffing.* The lady was slender, below the middle size, and apparently, a *miss in her Teens*—They were in the most intemperate *haste*, until the knot was tied; after which they returned to Carlisle, where they remained that night, and proceeded southward about eight o'clock the next morning.—Their *names* did not transpire.

143	16 September 1805, *Morning Post*	REMARKABLE OUTRAGE.—An examination of a very extraordinary nature took place at Hatton Garten Office. Mr. A_____n a person of respectability at Somers' Town, was charged with having on the preceding evening, cut and wounded several persons with a knife. It appeared that the prisoner, who was upwards of 60 years of age, enter […] a passion for a young girl, the daughter of a publican in the neighbourhood, and he determined to carry her off to Gretna Green. For this purpose, he hired a chase and four and provided himself with white favours, ribands, and every thing suitable to the projected wedding […].
	28 September 1805, *Jackson's Oxford Journal*	At the Public Office, Hatton Garden, on Saturday, the friends of the Gentleman who last week acted so strangely by endeavouring to elope to Gretna Green with the step-daughter of a Publican in Somers Town, made affidavit before the Magistrates, that he had been subject to frequent acts of insanity; and continuing in the same state, he was not brought to the office, but they suggested that a bill of indictment might be preferred against him, when the Court might determine how he shall be disposed of under a late Act of Parliament, which passed soon after Hatfied fired at his majesty, which makes it imprisonment for life in a mad house, for attempting the life of any person in such unfortunate situations. It is the wish of his friend to have him confined in a private mad house.
144	4 December 1805, *Bury and Norwich Post; or, Suffolk, Norfolk, Essex and Cambridge Advertiser*	*Fashionable Elopement*.—On Tuesday evening the beautiful and wealthy Miss B___rs *took wing* from the vicinity of Grosvenor-square, for the love breathing air of Gretna Green. The fair fugitive was accompanied by Capt. M.
	1806	
145	14 August 1806, *Trewman's Exeter Flying Post*	On Sunday night last the daughter of a respectable baronet, in Liverpool eloped from her father's house, on a trip to Gretna Green, with lieutenant R. an officer in the South Devon militia, now quartered there. So very unexpected was this event to the family, that not the smallest suspicion seems to have existed of the young lady's intention. The gentleman was seen loitering near her father's

		house at a late hour on Sunday night, and, as soon as the family retired to bed, the happy pair found means to take their departure, unperceived, in a chaise and four, for that blissful spot.
	1807	
146	2 September 1807, *Morning Post; Jackson's Oxford Journal,* 5 September 1807; *Caledonian Mercury,* 5 September 1807; *Bury and Norwich Post or, Suffolk, Norfolk, Essex and Cambridge Advertiser,* 9 September 1807; *Aberdeen Journal,* 16 September 1807	ELOPEMENT.—A *young Apothecary*, it seems, has prevailed upon a young Lady to take a rapid excursion with him from Brighton to *Gretna Green*. The Lady, under the care of her Governess, disappeared on Thursday morning last; and though nothing has since been heard of her, the name of her companion, or the road they have taken, is not doubted. The Lady, a Miss F____R, when of age, will possess a fortune of something better than 6000*l* a year: her lover is two or three years younger than herself.
147	3 December 1807, *Trewman's Exeter Flying Post or Plymouth and Cornish Advertiser; Hull Packet and Original Weekly Commercial, Literary and General Advertiser,* 24 November 1807; *Morning Chronicle,* 25 November 1807; *Derby Mercury,* 2 July 1807	ELOPEMENTS.—Miss D_____, of Muskham Grange, in Nottinghamshire, an heiress of large fortune and great personal accomplishments, has recently eloped with H. Hall, esq of Nottingham: they were united last week at Gretna Green.
	1808	
148	14 May 1808, *Morning Post*	The son of an Irish Peer of great fortune has eloped with a young Lady from Dublin. They are gone to Gretna Green to be riveted on the *Matrimonial Anvil* of the *Blacksmith.*
149	8 June 1808 *Aberdeen Journal*	At Gretna Green, Lord Viscount Glentworth, son of the Earl of Limerick, to Miss Edwards, daughter of the late Captain Tennison Edwards, of Oldcourt, Wicklow. Note: A report in the Morning Chronicle, 19 May 1808 indicates that this marriage was challenged by the Earl of Limerick on the grounds that his son

		was a minor, at 19. As was Miss Edwards, who was 17 at the time of the marriage.
150	9 November 1808, *Bury and Norwich Post; or, Suffolk, Norfolk, Essex and Cambridge Advertiser*	Capt. John Impey, of the Royal Navy, son of Sir Elijah Impey, of Newick Park, Kent, lately set off from Teignmouth in a post chaise and four, accompanied by Miss Cazal, of Exeter, on a matrimonial excursion to Gretna Green, where the ceremony was performed; and the parties are since returned to Exeter. The young lady is a ward in Chancery, amiable and highly accomplished, and will possess a handsome fortune when of age.
	23 November 1808, *Bury and Norwich Post; or, Suffolk, Norfolk, Essex and Cambridge Advertiser*	In the Court of Chancery on Wednesday, Sir S. Romilly informed the Court, that Captain Impey, under contempt for running away with Miss Castles, a Ward of this Court, and marrying her at Gretna Green, was ready to make a proper settlement upon Mrs. Impey. He also observed, that with respect to the rank in life and situation of the parties, there was no material disparity. The parties had met at a sister of the Captain's, at Teignmouth. Mrs. Castles, the mother of the young lady, resides at Exeter. While on the visit, the young lady was induced to go on a matrimonial excursion to Gretna Green. These were the short facts of the case. Captain Impey is a Naval Officer. The Lord Chancellor ordered that Captain Impey should be committed to the Prison of the Fleet.
1809		
151	15 March 1809, *Bury and Norwich Post; or, Suffolk, Norfolk, Essex and Cambridge Advertiser*	Capt. G_____, of a Regiment of Dragoons, some days since carried off the daughter of an affluent farmer in the neighbourhood of Bletchingly, in Surrey. The lady possesses an independent fortune, and is supposed to have gone to Gretna Green.—The parties were traced to London, but the clue was here broken.
152	26 July 1809, *Morning Post.* Also *Ipswich Journal*, 29 July 1809; *Bury and Norwich Post; or, Suffolk, Norfolk, Essex and Cambridge Advertiser*, 2	On Saturday morning a young Lady of independent fortune of 20,000*l*. (left by an aunt), daughter of an eminent merchant in Broad-street, eloped with one of her father's footmen, and immediately set off in a post chaise and four for Gretna Green. They were missed in about two hours after their departure, and

	August 1809; *Derby Mercury,* 3 August 1809	were pursued and overtaken at an Inn in Huntingdon just as they were about to proceed on their journey. The servant made his escape, and the Lady has returned to town with her father.
	1810	
153	3 January 1810, *Bury and Norwich Post; or, Suffolk, Norfolk, Essex and Cambridge Advertiser*	An elopement for Gretna Green took place on Friday last from the neighbourhood of Eye; the parties are said to be a rich Norfolk heiress and a spirited young Suffolk farmer, at whose father's house the lady was visiting.—Their plan was so well arranged as to have eluded all suspicion, and no attempt was made to pursue them.
154	10 February 1810, *Morning Chronicle*	ELOPEMENT.—An elopement has taken place which will make a very considerable noise. The elegant Miss ELWES, daughter of GEORGE ELWES, Esq. eloped with a young clergyman of Oxford, of the name of DUFFIELD, who was assisted in the plot by two other gentlemen of the cloth on Wednesday morning last. Mr. ELWES is, perhaps, the richest ready-monied commoner in England. He is heir to the peculiar virtues of his economical father, and is estimated to be worth near a million of floating disposable cash, and she is his only child. She is under age, but was not made a Ward of Chancery. The plan devised by the three clerical gentleman was well concerted. One of them under pretence of paying his addresses to a lady on a visit to Mrs. ELWES was contrived to be received into the family in the character of her lover, where he was treated with the utmost respect; and this gave him opportunities of arranging the matter for his friend Mr. DUFFIELD. On Wednesday morning he prevailed on Mrs. ELWES to accompany his own intended wife a shopping; and in their absence, he handed with the utmost openness, Miss ELWES to the door, near with a chaise and four was drawn up. He met Mr. ELWES in the hall, who asked them where they were going; she was without a hat or bonnet, and said she was only going to her mamma, who was waiting for her. The reverend gentleman proceeded with her, place her in the chaise, by the side of her gallant, and returned to the house with the utmost unconcern. Mr. ELWES had inquired in the mean time, how long Mrs

		ELWES had been out, and seeing her conductor return, inquired where his daughter was. The clergyman, with perfect *sang froid*, told him he had delivered her to the man destined to make her happy; and that she was off to Gretna Green, where he advised him to follow and assist in the ceremony. The distress of Mr. ELWES, and still more of Mrs ELWES, on her return, may be conceived. They both set off in a post chaise and four, on the north road but we believe they proceeded no farther than St. Alban's where not having hear the least account of their route, they resolved to return; and yesterday no tidings had been received of the happy pair.
	17 February 1810, *Jackson's Oxford Journal*	We are requested to state, that Mr. Duffield, of Merton College, Oxford, who eloped with Miss Elwes, is a Layman, and that none of the parties concerned were Clergymen. We understand that Mr. D.'s addresses had been permitted two years ago, but some change in the opinions of the governing part of the family had arisen, and other suitors were strongly recommended to the young lady. She, however, continued constant to her first attachment. Mr. D. arrived safe at Gretna Green, on Thursday night, and was immediately married to his fair and lovely companion. Note: Also *Caledonian Mercury*, 19 February 1810, and *Bury and Norwich Post; or, Suffolk, Norfolk, Essex and Cambridge Advertiser*, 21 February 1810, with additional information about the person who handed her to the door. A simple marriage announcement appeared in *Bury and Norwich Post; or, Suffolk, Norfolk, Essex and Cambridge Advertiser*, 21 February 1810.
	1 March 1810, *Morning Post; Hull Packet and Original Weekly Commercial, Literary and General Advertiser*, 6 March 1810; *Derby Mercury*, 8 March 1810; *Lancaster Gazetteer: and General Advertiser for*	The old *Parson Joseph*, at Gretna Green, is still alive and hearty—drinks nothing *but brandy*, and has neither been sick nor sober these forty years. He got a princely fee lately for marrying the great heiress Miss ELWES to Mr. DUFFIELD, the fortunate bridegroom having given him 50*l.* sterling.

	Lancashire, Westmoreland, &c., 17 March 1810	
155	21 February 1810, *Bury and Norwich Post; or, Suffolk, Norfolk, Essex and Cambridge Advertiser*	On Saturday se'nnight returned to Eye Park, in this county, from a matrimonial excursion to Gretna Green, Thos. Wythe, jun. Esq. and his lady.—On this occasion there were great rejoicings, the bells ringing to welcome the happy couple, fireworks displayed, and the populace regaled with several barrels of old beer, &c. &c.—Mrs. W. is the only daughter and sole heiress of Mallett Case, Esq. of Lynn, with a fortune little short to what is denominated a PLUM!
156	23 July 1810, *Hampshire Telegraph and Sussex Chronicle*	On Tuesday evening last, Mr. C. a gentleman of large expectations, eloped with the beautiful Miss N. of the neighbourhood of Brighton; they are supposed to have taken the road for Gretna Green.
157	4 July 1810, *Lancaster Gazetteer: and General Advertiser for Lancashire, Westmoreland, &c; Hampshire Telegraph and Sussex Chronicle*, 2 July 1810	At Gretna Green, W. Abbott Esq., to Miss E. Kennett, both of Bath; Mr. A. was a first-rate performer on the Bath stage, and the lady possesses considerable personal, mental, and *pecuniary* attractions.
1811		
158	11 September 1811, *Morning Post*	AN ELOPEMENT.—A young Lady, like the spirit of that wine which her father deals in, being too *volatile* to be confined within moderate compass, has eloped, within a few days, for Gretna Green; and, for fear of not finding a successor to the old Blacksmith, has taken a *Parson* with her. In fact, a young Reverend *Cantab* is the happy man. The Divine has, however, to *pray* for ten thousand *good* reasons that she may attain the age of twenty-one, of which she wants *but* four years and a half. This dutiful young woman did not forget, on their arrival at Canterbury, to send a few lines by a *carrier*, informing her friends that she had as much impatience to see Scotland as four good horses would allow her.

Table 2: Richard Perry and Clementina Clerke: Elopement or Abduction?

Date and Newspaper	Article
22-24 March 1791, *London Chronicle*	SINGULAR ELOPEMENT. A Miss Clerke, a young lady of the age of 14 years, and who will be possessed, it is said of no less a sum than 6000*l*. per annum, with a considerable share of ready money, eloped from her boarding-school, in Park street, Bristol, on Saturday night last, for Gretna-green. The affair was managed in the following manner: a carriage, horses, and livery servant, were procured so as to look exactly like those of the young lady's guardian; they drove up to the boarding-school, the servant producing a letter in the name of the guardian, well counterfeited, to Miss M., requesting that Miss C. may be suffered to spend the evening at his house at Clifton, that a relation of her's, who was just arrived, and under the necessity of leaving town that evening for London, may have the pleasure of seeing her. The young lady was suffered, with her maid, to pay this visit, but instead of vising at Clifton, she found her way to Stokes Croft, to the house of her admirer, a surgeon, where they remained till eleven o'clock at night, when they set out in a chaise and four, accompanied by her maid, and a gentleman of his acquaintance.
23-25 March 1791, *Lloyd's Evening Post; World (1787)*, 24 March 1791	ELOPEMENTS. An elopement of a singular nature took place at Bristol on Saturday evening. A Creolian nymph, of the name of Clerke, who is possessed of 25,000l. and who will have 6,000l. a year when of age, eloped from the Park-street Boarding-school, with a Mr. Perry, a surgeon and apothecary of Bristol, for Gretna-Green. Although the young Lady is only *fourteen* years of age, the affair was managed with the greatest secrecy and judgment. A note was sent to the school supposed from Mr. Gordon, an eminent merchant of that town, who was her guardian, desiring that the School-mistress would permit Miss C. to go to his house to drink tea with his family; and at the same time, a carriage, with horses and liveries resembling those of Mr. Gordon was sent to convey her. A second note was sent shortly after, intimating, that on account of company, Mr. G. should keep the young Lady at his house til morning. In the interim, the Lovers, accompanied by her maid, and a friend of the Gentleman's set off in a post-chaise and four: unfortunately, before they had completed the first sage, the carriage was overset and broken to pieces. They however, procured a fresh chaise; and leaving the Gentleman behind them, preceded on

	their journey. The School-mistress, on the following day, discovering the cheat, and gaining intelligence of their route, pursued them; but the Lovers having a start of near twenty-four hours, it is most probable the pursuit will prove fruit-less.
24 March 1791, *Public Advertiser*	*SINGULAR ELOPEMENT.* BRISTOL, *Monday Morning.* A Miss Clerke, a young Lady of the age of 14 years and who will be possessed, it is said, of no less a sum than 6000*l*. per annum, with a considerable share of ready money, eloped from her Boarding School, in Park street, on Saturday night last, for Gretna-Green. The affair was managed in the following manner: a carriage, horses, and livery servants were procured so as to look exactly like those of the young Lady's Guardian; they drew up to the Boarding-School, the servant producing a letter in the name of the Guardian, well counterfeited, to Miss Mills, requesting that Miss C. may be suffered to spend the evening at his house at Clifton; that a relation of her's, who was just arrived, and under the necessity of leaving town that evening for London, may have the pleasure of seeing her. The young Lady was suffered, with her maid, to pay this visit, but instead of visiting Clifton, she found her way to Stokes Croft, to the house of her admirer, where they remained till eleven o'clock at night, when they set out in a chaise and four, accompanied by her maid, and a Gentleman of his acquaintance. Miss C. not coming home at night, Miss Mills concluded that she was detained to sleep at her Guardian's, nor was this circumstance understood until she was missed from Church on the following day. The Gentleman with whom she went off was not known until late on Sunday Evening;--a number of young fellows were suspected; strict inquiry was made for every Gentleman of the Sister Kingdom; at last it was discovered that Mr. _____ had ordered the chaise and four to the turnpike, from the White Hart, and that he got silver for four guineas. These circumstances, and his not being seen in town, put the affair out of all doubt. At half after ten o'clock last night (Sunday) Weekes, from the Bull, Miss Mills, and her brother, set out Post after the Runaways, which will avail little as the lover have had twenty-four hours "[Daw?."] This young Lady has been advertised in a very singular way. It is a laughable notice altogether.—"The person or persons are cautioned seriously not to marry the Lady". How many persons do they think seriously could marry the Lady by *law?* They are cautioned, however, only *not* to marry her. There is no other advice whatever. Miss Clerke is the niece of the late Mr. Ogilvie, of Banff, who made a fortune in the West Indies, and left it to this young girl, whom her friends sent from her

	native place to an English Boarding School to *finish her education.*
24-26 March 1791, *Whitehall Evening Post*	A Miss Clerke, a young lady of the age of 14 years, and who will be possessed, it is said of no less a sum than 6000l. per annum, with a considerable share of ready money, eloped from her boarding-school, in Park street, Bristol, on Saturday night last, for Gretna-green. The affair was managed in the following manner: a carriage, horses, and livery servant, were procured so as to look exactly like those of the young lady's guardian; they drove up to the boarding-school, the servant producing a letter in the name of the guardian, well counterfeited, to Miss M., requesting that Miss C. may be suffered to spend the evening at his house at Clifton, that a relation of her's, who was just arrived, and under the necessity of leaving town that evening for London, may have the pleasure of seeing her. The young lady was suffered, with her maid, to pay this visit, but instead of vising at Clifton, she found her way to Stokes Croft, to the house of her admirer, Mr. P__rr__y, a surgeon, where they remained till eleven o'clock at night, when they set out in a chaise and four, accompanied by her maid, and a gentleman of his acquaintance. The latter gentleman returned to Bristol late the following night, *much bruised*: the carriage, it seems, had broke down, and he, Mr. P. and the maid were hurt; but fortunately Miss C. sustained no injury, nor did she seemed alarmed. On the friend observing "that this was rather unlucky if they were pursued," she very courageously said, "if we are overtaken, you shall see (taking hold of a pistol) how I shall defend myself! The uncle of this heroine, Mr. Ogilvie, died but a few weeks ago: -- Miss C. has a brother, who, by Mr. Ogilvie's first will, was to have shared half the fortune; but Mr. Ogilvie altered his will some days before his death, cut off Mr. Clerke to one shilling, for the very step that his sister has taken – a *clandestine marriage*—and left the whole of the property to the sister; who, it is said, was unacquainted with this circumstance at the time of her elopement.
25-28 March 1791, *Evening Mail*	BRISTOL *March 23.* WEEKES, Miss MILLS, and her brother, arrived here late last night; they met near Carlisle by Mr. and Mrs. Perry, on their return from Gretna-Green, on Tuesday morning at the hour of ten o'clock.—Miss Mills went up to the carriage, and requested to speak to Miss Clerke; Mr. P. replied there was no such person in the carriage; Miss Mills again begged she might speak to "the Child" but for an instant. Mr. P. assured her there was no person to answer that description in his company; he said he had Mrs Perry and a servant in the carriage, and that he know of no business Miss Mills had with

	either; he flattered himself the Lady she meant would excuse her further attention. During this conversation Mr. P. held a pistol in his hand, and afterwards drove off by a bye road towards London, where Miss Mills set out for this morning. Every step that can possibly effect Mr. P. will most certainly be taken. The Scotch Gentlemen with whom he is to fight this battler are determined, if possible, to keep the property in *safe* hands.
Whitehall Evening Post, 26-29 March 1791; *Public Advertiser*, 29 March 1791	*Extract of a Letter from Bristol, March 25* [As above although *safe* is not italicised] "Mrs Perry has contradicted, by a public advertisement, the suggestion that she was taken away by force, and requested that no credit may be given to a report "injurious to the honour of her husband, and to her own happiness!"
29 March 1791, *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*	The Bristol Runaways were met by the innkeeper and mistress of the boarding-school, who pursued them, at Carlisle, upon their *return* from Gretna-Green, where every thing had been transacted to the satisfaction of both persons!
15 June 1791, *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*	The pursuit of Mr. And Mrs. PERRY has ended, and the pursuers are returned home *minus* some cash and not a little temper.
17 April 1794, *Oracle and Public Advertiser; Morning Chronicle*, 18 April 1794	A report of the trial of Richard Vining Perry for forcible abduction for lucre of Miss Clerke. He is found not guilty.

Works Cited

Primary Sources

An Act for the Better Preventing of Clandestine Marriage, Statutes at Large, vol. VII, 1747-1756, 20 Geo 2 – 29 Geo 2, CAP XXXIII

Analytical Review: or History of Literature—

—'ART. IX, the Pavilion, 23.6 (June, 1796), 601

—'Book Review', 'Juliet or the Cottager', 3 (March, 1789), 345

—'Review, The Young Philosopher', 28.1 (July 1798), 73-77

Anonymous—

—*The laws respecting women, as they regard their natural rights, or their connections and conduct …*, in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, (London: Joseph Johnson, 1777)

—*The Platonic Guardian: or, History of an Orphan,* by a Lady, in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (Dublin: Byrne, Wogan, Colbert and Halpen, 1788)

—*The trial of Richard Vining Perry, Esq. for forcible abduction, or stealing an heiress, from the boarding-school of Miss Mills, in the city of Bristol; with all the arguments of counsel, Before Vicary Gibbs, Esq. The Recorder thereof. on Monday the 14th of April, 1794. Dedicated to all Mr. Perry's Prosecutors. With a Preface and Commentary on his Trial, By one of the Counsel*, in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (Bristol: printed for and sold by all booksellers in town and country, [1794?])

Austen, Jane, *Northanger Abbey, Lady Susan, The Watsons, Sandition*, ed. by James Kinsley and John Davie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003; reissued 2008)

Barrett, Charlotte, *Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay, author of Evelina, Cecilla &, edited by her niece*, 10 vols (London: Henry Colburn, 1846), VI (1793-1812)

Barbauld, Anna Letitia, ed., *The Correspondence of Samuel Richardson* (1804), *Cambridge Library Collection*, 6 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011)

Bennett, John, *Letters to a young lady …..*, in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, 2 vols (Warrington: printed by W. Eyres, for the author, and sold by G.G.J. and J. Robinsons, Pater-Noster Row; Messrs. Rivingtons, and J. Johnson, St. Paul's Church-Yard; T. Cadell, in the Strand; J. Murray, Fleet-Street, London; and I. Clarke, Manchester, MDCCLXXXIX (1789)), II

Biddulph, E., *Some account of the case between Elizabeth Canning, and Mary Squires; As it now stands upon the Foot of the Evidence given on both Sides, upon the late Trial at the Old-Bailey,* in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (London: MDCCLIV (1754))

Blackstone, William, esq., *Commentaries on the laws of England … By William Blackstone, Esq. Vinerian Professor of Law, and solicitor general to her Majesty*, in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, 4 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1765-1769)

British Critic, 1793-1826, 'Book Review', 38 (September, 1811), 213-220
Brookhouse, Ann, *A Narrative of the Seizure and Confinement of Ann Brookhouse…,* in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (London: F & C Rivingtons, and J Johnson, St Paul's Church-Yard, 1798)
Brunton, Mary—
—*Emmeline with some other Pieces: Mary Brunton*, British Women Novelists 1750-1850 (London: Routledge/Theommes Press, 1992; rept. of 1819 edition)
—*Self-Control* (1811), ed. by Anthony Mandal (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2014)
Brydges, Sir Egerton, *Imaginative Biography,* 2 vols (London: Saunders and Otley, 1834)
Burney Collection Newspapers—
—*Bury and Norwich Post, or Suffolk, Norfolk, Essex, and Cambridge Advertiser,* 29 February 1804
—*Caledonian Mercury*—
—20 March 1802
—1 March 1804
—*Daily Advertiser,* 28 November 1782
—*Evening Mail,* 25-28 March 1791
—*Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser,* 29 March 1791
—*General Advertiser*, 18 June 1751
—*General Evening Post*—
—22-24 March 1791
—30 April-3 May 1791
—*Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 3 September 1803
—*Lancaster Gazetteer,* 27 March 1802
—*London Daily Post and General Advertiser*, 20 March 1741
—*London Evening Post*—
—30 January to 1 February 1753
—20-23 October 1753
—*Morning Chronicle*
—18 March 1802
—24 March 1802
—28 March 1791
—4 April 1791
—18 April 1794
—30 April 1791
—5 September 1803
—28 November 1803
—23 February 1804
—12 February 1811
—*Morning Herald*, 18 September 1798
—*Morning Post*, 23 February 1804
—*Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*—
—29 March 1791
—4 April 1791

—8 April 1791
—*Morning Post and Gazetteer*, 17 March 1802
—*Old England or The Constitutional Journal* 21 April 1744
—*Oracle and Public Advertiser*—
—14 April 1794
—17 April 1794
—*Public Advertiser*—
—14 February 1754
—22 March 1791
—8 April 1791
—15 April 1791
—*Public Ledger or the Daily Register of Commerce and Intelligence*—
—15 April 1761
—17 April 1761
—*Star*, 6 January 1792
—*The Times*, 8 April 1791
—*Whitehall Evening Post (1770)*, 28–30 July 1789
—*Whitehall Evening Post or London Intelligencer*—
—17–20 March 1750
—19-22 October 1751
—*World (1787)*—
—1 April 1791
—4 April 1791
—13 April 1791
Burney, Frances, *Camilla or a Picture of Youth* (1796), ed. by Edward A. Bloom and Lillian D. Bloom (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972; reissued 2009)
Carroll, John, *Selected Letters of Samuel Richardson* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964)
Critical Review or Annals of Literature—
—'Ad Line De Courcy', 22 (February, 1798) 238
—'Art. V. the Auction: A Modern Novel', 8 (December, 1759), 452-458
—'Art. 18, the History of Ophelia, Published by the Author of David Simple', 9 (April, 1760), 318
—'Art. V.' Self Controul, a Novel, 2 vols, 24.2 (October, 1811), 160-169
—'The Count De Santerre: A Romance', 21 (November, 1797), 354
— 'Juliet; Or, the Cottager. in a Series of Letters', 67 (March, 1789), 238
—'The Old Maner House: A Novel', 8 (May, 1793), 44-54
—'Review', 'Camilla: Or, a Picture of Youth', 18 (September, 1796), 26-40
—'Review', "Dusseldorf; Or, the Fratricide", 24 (October, 1798), 236
—'Review', 'The Young Philosopher', 24 (September 1798), 77-84
—'The Romance of the Forest: Interspersed with some Pieces of Poetry', 4 (April, 1792), 458-460
—The Trial of Richard Vining Perry, Esq. for Forcible Abduction, Or Stealing an Heiress, from the Boarding-School of Miss Mills, in the City of Bristol; with all the Arguments of Counsel, before Vicary Gibbs, Esq. the Recorder Thereof', 13 (April, 1795), 422-424

De Crespigny, Mary Champion, *The Pavilion: A Novel*, in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, 4 vols (London: Minerva Press, 1796)
Edinburgh Evening Courant, 1 April 1754
English Review or, An abstract of English and foreign literature 1783-1795—
—'ART. 21, Fatal Follies: Or, the History of the Countess of Stanmore', 11 (January, 1788), 67
—'ART. V. The Old Manor House: a Novel', 21 (April, 1793), 264-270
—'ART. 23. The Platonic Guardian; Or, History of an Orphan', 11 (January, 1788) 68
—ART. VII, The Romance of the Forest; Interspersed with some Pieces of Poetry 20, (November, 1792), 52-353
English Review of Literature, Science, Discoveries, Inventions, and Practical Controversies and Contests—
—'ART. XXV, Camilla; Or, A Picture of Youth', 28 (August, 1796), 178-180
—'ART. XX, Joan: A Novel', 28 (November, 1796), 479-480
—'ART. XXVII, The Pavilion: a Novel', 28 (August, 1796), 181-184
Erskine, John, *An Institute of the Law of Scotland*, 8th ed., ed. by James Badenach Nicolson, (1871) 2 vols (Edinburgh: Law Society of Scotland, Butterworths reprt 1989)
Fielding, Henry, 'The Champion: Containing a Series of Papers, Humorous, Moral, Political and Critical', *Eighteenth Century Journals,* 1.16 (February 1740), 274-281
Fielding, Sarah—
—*The History of Ophelia* (1760), ed. by Peter Sabor (Ontario: Broadview Press, 2004)
—*Remarks on Clarissa (1749)*, The Augustan Reprint Society 231-232 (Pasadena, California: Castle Press, 1985)
Fitz John, Matilda, *Joan!!! A Novel, in Four Volumes*, in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (London: Hookham and Carpenter, 1786)
Gally, Henry, 'Some Considerations upon Clandestine Marriages' (1750), *The Marriage Act of 1753: Four Tracts* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1984)
General Magazine and Impartial Review, April 1789
Gentleman's Magazine and Historical Chronicle, January 1736-December 1833—
—'A Critical ACCOUNT of CLARISSA in 7 Volumes. Translated from the French', 19 (June, 1749), 245-246 and (August, 1749), 345-349
—'A Summary of the Case of ELIZABETH CANNING, Containing all the Facts as they have been Affirmed, Denied, Or Variously Related, during the Dispute, Whether She is Or is Not an Impostor, and the Arguments on both Sides the Question', 23 (March, 1753), 107-111 —'Letter', 23 (November, 1753), 511-512
—Review, 'The Three Brothers. A Romance' (November, 1804), 1047
—'Some Account of the INVISIBLE SPY, Lately Published, in Four Volumes', 24 (December, 1754), 560-566
Gerrard, Christine, ed., *Samuel Richardson: Correspondence with Aaron Hill and the Hill Family* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013)

Gregory, J., *A father's legacy to his daughters, by the late Dr. Gregory of Edinburgh*, in *Eighteenth-Century Collections Online* (London: G. Robertson, 1792)
Halsband, Robert, ed., *The Complete Letters of Lady Mary Worley Montagu,* 3 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), vol. III (1752-1762)
Haywood, Eliza—
—*The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* (1751), ed. by Christine Blouch (Ontario: Broadview Press, 1998)
—*The Invisible Spy,* (1754) ed. by Carol Stewart (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2014)
Hazlitt, William, *Lectures on the English Comic Writers and Fugitive Writings* (London: J. M Dent, 1967)
Johnson, Samuel, *A Dictionary of the English Language,* 2 vols (London: W. Strachan and others, 1755; repr. London: Times Books, 1979)
King, Kathryn R. and Alexander Pettit, eds., *Selected Works of Eliza Haywood,* 3 vols (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2001), I and II
Lennox, Charlotte, *The Female Quixote* (1752), ed. by Amanda Gilroy (London: Penguin Books, 2006)
London Magazine, Or, Gentleman's Monthly Intelligencer, 1747-1783
—August 1753, 356-361
—September 1753, 407-410
—November 1753, 497-505
Lover of virtue, *Critical remarks on Sir Charles Grandison, Clarissa and Pamela. Enquiring, whether they have a tendency to corrupt or improve the public taste and morals. In a letter to the author. By a lover of virtue,* in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (London: printed for J. Dowse, opposite Fountain Court in the Strand, MDCCLIV (1754))
Mackenzie, Sir George, *The Institutions of the Law of Scotland,* 8th edition, corrected (Edinburgh: E. and J. Robertsons for L. Hunter and J. Brown, 1758)
Martin, John, *The Marriage Law of Scotland, Stated* (London: R. Jameson, 1787)
Memoirs of the Life of Mrs. A ___a W___t…, in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (London: W. Reeves, 1750)
Monthly Magazine and British Register, 'Review', 'The Young Philosopher', 39 (December, 1798), 516
Monthly Review, 1749-1750—
—G., 'Book Review', *Memoirs of the Life of Mrs. A ___a W___t,* 2 (December, 1749), 114-115
—R., 'Book Review' 'The History of Cornelia', 3 (May, 1750) 59-61
Monthly Review, Or, New Literary Journal, 1750-1751, G., 'Book Review', 5 (October, 1751)
Monthly Review: Or, Literary Journal, 1752-1825—
—'Book Review, 10 (May, 1754), 393-394
—E., ART. XIII. *The Romance of the Forest:* interspersed with some Pieces of Poetry. By Mrs Radcliffe, By the Authoress of "A Sicilian Romance &c.", 3 Vols, 12 mo, 9s. Sewed. Hookham (8 May 1792), 82-87
—G., 'ART. VI., The Laws Respecting WOMEN…', 57 (December, 1777), 441-449
—'K-n-k, Art. 3, the History of Ophelia', 22 (April, 1760), 328

—N., Art. 34. Juliet; Or the Cottager: In a Series of Letters, by a Lady, 4 (January, 1791), 9
—'NOVELS', 'The Count de Santerre', 24 (October, 1797), 199-202
—Review, E., 'Art. IX. Camilla; Or a Picture of Youth', 21 (October, 1796), 156-163
—Review, 'The Young Philosopher', 28 (March, 1799), 346-347
Monthly Visitor, and Pocket Companion, July 1797-Dec.1800, 'Book Review', 'The Count De Santerre, A Romance', 2 (July, 1797), 73-77
Newcastle General Magazine, 'The Auction: A Modern Novel' (January, 1760), 28-33
Pennington, Rev. Montague, *A Series of Letters between Mrs Elizabeth Carter and Miss Catheine Talbot ……*, 2 vols (London: Rivington, 1809)
Plumer, Francis, *A candid examination of the history of Sir Charles Grandison* (1754), 3rd ed. (New York: Garland Publishing, 1974)
Radcliffe, Ann—
—*The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* (1789), ed. by Alison Milbank (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995)
—*Gaston de Blondeville, or The Court of Henry III Keeping Festival in Ardenne* (London: Colburn, 1826)
—*The Romance of the Forest* (1791), ed. by Chloe Chard (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009)
Reeve, Clara, *The progress of romance,* in *Eighteenth-Century Collections Online*, 2 vols (Colchester, 1785)
Richardson, Samuel, —
—*Clarissa or The History of a Young Lady* (1747-48), ed. by Angus Ross (London: Penguin Books, 1985; reissued 2004)
—*The History of Sir Charles Grandison* (1753-54), ed. by Jocelyn Harris, 3 vols (London: Oxford University Press, 1972)
—*The Paths of Virtue Delineated* (1756), 'Richardsoniana XIV' (New York: Garland Publishing, 1974)
—'The Rambler', 2, 97 (19 February 1751), 234-241
Samuel Richardson's Published Commentary on Clarissa 1747-65, ed. by Tom Keymer, vols 1 and 3 (London: Pickering & Chatto, 1998)
Scott, Sarah—
—*The History of Cornelia*, in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (London: A Millar, 1750),
—*The History of Cornelia*, ed. by Caroline Franklin, British Women Novelists 1750-1850 (London: Routledge/Thoemmes Press, 1992: repr. 1750 edition)
Scott, Sir Walter, *Lives of the Novelists* (1827), ed. by Ernest Rhys (London: J. M. Dent, 1928)
Selden, Catherine, *The Count de Santerre: A Romance*, in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, 2 vols (Bath: R. Crutwell, 1797)
Shuttleton David E. and John A. Dussinger, eds., *Correspondence of Samuel Richardson: Correspondence with George Cheyne and Thomas Edwards* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013)
Smith, Charlotte—

—*Emmeline, the Orphan of the Castle* (1788), ed. by Loraine Fletcher (Toronto: Broadview Press, 2003)
—*The Romance of Real Life* (1787), ed. by Michael Gamer, The Works of Charlotte Smith, I (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2005)
—*The Young Philosopher* (1798), ed. by A. A. Markley, The Works of Charlotte Smith, X (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2006)
—*The Young Philosopher*, ed. by Elizabeth Kraft (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1999)
Todd, Janet and Marilyn Butler, eds., *The Works of Mary Wollstonecraft*, vol 7 (London: William Pickering, 1989)
Town and Country Magazine, Or, Universal Repository of Knowledge, Instruction, and Entertainment, 21 (April, 1789), 175
Williams, Anna, "VERSES to Mr RICHARDSON, on His History of Sir CHARLES GRANDISON", *The Gentleman's Magazine: And Historical Chronicle, Jan.1736-Dec.1833*, 24 (January, 1754), 40
Williams, Ioan, ed., *Sir Walter Scott: On Novelists and Fiction* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968)
Wollstonecraft, Mary, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), *Cambridge Library Collection* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010)
Woodfin, Mrs, *The Auction: a Modern Novel*, in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* 2 vols (Dublin, 1760)

Secondary Sources

Allan, David—
—*A Nation of Readers: The Lending Library in Georgian England* (London: The British Library, 2008)
—*Commonplace Books and Reading in Georgian England, Cambridge Books online* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010)
—*Making British Culture: English Readers and the Scottish Enlightenment, 1740-1830* (London: Routledge, 2008)
Altick, Richard D., *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public 1800-1900* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957)
Armstrong, Nancy—
—*Desire and Domestic Fiction, A Political History of the Novel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987; repr. 1989)
—*How Novels Think: The Limits of British Individualism from 1719-1900* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005)
Backscheider, Paula R., ed., *Revising Women: Eighteenth-Century "Women's Fiction" and Social Engagement* (London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000)
Backscheider, Paula R. and Catherine Ingrassia, eds., *A Companion to the Eighteenth-Century English Novel and Culture* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005)
Barker, Hannah, *Newspapers, Politics and English Society 1695-1855* (Harlow: Longman, 2000)

Baldrick, Chris, ed., *The Oxford Book of Gothic Tales* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992)

Ballaster, Ros, Margaret Beetham, Elizabeth Frazer and Sandra Hebron, eds., *Women's World: Ideology, Femininity and the Woman's Magazine* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1991)

Bannet, Eve Tavor—

—*The Domestic Revolution: Enlightenment Feminisms and the Novel* (Balitimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000)

—'The Marriage Act of 1753: "A Most Cruel Law for the Fair Sex"', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 30.3 (Spring, 1997), 233-254

—'The Narrator as Invisible Spy: Eliza Haywood, Secret History and the Novel', *Journal For Early Modern Cultural Studies* (University Of Pennsylvania Press), 14.4 (Fall, 2014), 143-162

Barchas, Janine, *Graphic Design, Print Culture, and the Eighteenth-Century Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003)

Barnard, Toby, *The Abduction of a Limerick Heiress: Social and Political Relations in Mid-Eighteenth Century Ireland*, Maynooth Studies in Local History XX (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1998)

Barr, Rebecca Anne, 'Richardson's *Sir Charles Grandison* and the Symptoms of Subjectivity', *The Eighteenth Century* 51.4 (2010), 391-411

Batchelor, Jennie, *Dress, Distress and Desire: Clothing and the Female Body in Eighteenth-Century Literature* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005)

Battestin, Martin C., 'Fielding, Henry (1707–1754)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004)

Beebee, Thomas O., 'Doing Clarissa's will: Samuel Richardson's legal genres', *International Journal Semiot Law*, 2.2 (June, 1989), 159-182

Binhammer, Katherine, *The Seduction Narrative in Britian1747-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009)

Blewett, David, ed., *Passion and Virtue – Essays on the Novels of Samuel Richardson* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001)

Bowers, Toni, *Force or Fraud: British Seduction Stories and the Problem of Resistance 1660-1760* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011)

Brant, Clare and Diane Purkiss, eds. *Women, Texts and Histories 1575-1760* (London: Routledge, 1992)

Brissenden, R. F., *Virtue in Distress: Studies in the Novel of Sentiment from Richardson to Sade* (London: MacMillan Press, 1974)

Brooks, Peter, *Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention in Narrative* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989)

Brophy, Elizabeth Bergen, *Samuel Richardson* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1987)

Brown, Murray L., 'Sir Hargrave Pollexfen, William Hogarth and "that Obelisk Behind Us": Sexual Violence in "Sir Charles Grandison"', *Philological Quarterly*, 75.4 (Fall, 1996), 455-470

Bueler, Lois E.,—

—"*Clarissa's" Plots* (Newark: University of Delaware Press and London: Associated University Presses, 1994)

—*Clarissa: The Eighteenth-Century Response 1747-1804*, vol. I, 'Reading Clarissa', ed. by Lois E. Bueler, AMS Studies in the Eighteenth Century: The Clarissa Project, 10 vols (New York: AMS Press, 2010)
Campbell, Jill, 'Domestic Intelligence: Newspaper Advertising and the Eighteenth-Century Novel', *The Yale Journal of Criticism*, 15.2 (2002), 251-291
Castle, Terry—
—'The Carnivalization of Eighteenth-Century English Narrative Author(s)', PMLA, 99.5 (October, 1984), 903-916
—*Clarissa's Ciphers: Meaning and Disruption in Richardson's "Clarissa"* (London: Cornwell University Press, 1982)
—*Masquerade and Civilization: The Carnivalesque in Eighteenth-Century English Culture and Fiction* (London: Methuen, 1986)
Chaplin, Sue, *Gothic and the Rule of Law 1764-1820* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan 2007)
Clark, Lorna J., ed., *A Celebration of Frances Burney* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007)
Clarke, Bob, *From Grub Street to Fleet Street: An Illustrated History of English Newspapers to 1899* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2004)
Clery, E. J., *The Rise of Supernatural Fiction 1762-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995)
Cornett, Judy, 'The Treachery of Perception: Evidence and Experience in Clarissa', *University of Cincinnati Law Review*, 63 (1994-1995), 165-194
Cottom, Daniel, *The Civilized Imagination: A Study of Ann Radcliffe, Jane Austen and Walter Scott* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985)
Craciun, Adriana, 'Citizens of the World: Émigrés, Romantic Cosmopolitans, and Charlotte Smith', *Nineteenth-Century Contexts: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 29.2-3 (June/September, 2007), 169-185
Davis, Lennard J., *Factual Fictions: The Origins of the English Novel*, 2nd edn. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996)
DeLucia, JoEllen, From the Female Gothic to a Feminist Theory of History: Ann Radcliffe and the Scottish Enlightenment', *The Eighteenth Century,* 50.1 (Spring, 2009)
Doody, Margaret Anne—
—*A Natural Passion: A Study of the Novels of Samuel Richardson* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974)
—*Frances Burney: The Life in the Works* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988)
—*The True Story of the Novel* (New Brunswick, N.J: Rutgers University Press, 1996)
Doody, Margaret Anne and Peter Sabor, eds., *Samuel Richardson: Tercentenary Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989)
Duff, Virginia, 'Early English women novelists testify to the law's manifest cruelties against women before the marriage act of 1753', *Women's Studies*, 29.5 (2000) 583-618
Eagleton, Terry, *The Rape of Clarissa: Writing, Sexuality and Class Struggle in Samuel Richardson* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1982)

Eaves, T.C. Duncan and Ben D. Kimpel, *Samuel Richardson: A Biography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971)
Ellis, Kate Ferguson—
—'Female Empowerment: The Secret in the Gothic Novel', *Phi Kappa Phi Forum*, 90.3 (Fall 2010), 8-9
—*The Contested Castle: Gothic Novels and the Subversion of Domestic Ideology* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989)
Elliott, Robert, *The Gretna Green Memoirs* (London: published by the Gretna Green Parson, 1842)
Epstein, Julia, *The Iron Pen: Frances Burney and the Politics of Women's Writing* (Bristol: Bristol Classical Press, 1989)
Farr, Jason, S., 'Sharp Minds/Twisted Bodies: Intellect, Disability, and Female Education in Frances Burney's *Camilla', The Eighteenth Century,* 55.1 (2014), 1-17
Fergus, Jan, *Provincial Readers in Eighteenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006)
Fletcher, Loraine, *Charlotte Smith: A Critical Biography* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 1998; repr. 2001)
Flynn, Carol Houlihan and Edward Copeland, eds., *Clarissa and Her Readers: New Essays for The Clarissa Project*, vol IX (New York: AMS Press, 1999)
Forster, Antonia, *Index to Book Reviews in England 1749 to 1774* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1990)
Frank, Frederick S., *The First Gothics: A Critical Guide to the English Gothic Novel* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1987)
Fry, Carrol L., *Charlotte Smith*, Twayne's English Authors Series, DXXVIII (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1996)
Fulk, Mark K., 'Mismanaging Mothers: Matriarchy and Romantic Education in Charlotte Smith's *The Young Philosopher*', *Women's Writing*, 16.1 (May 2009), 94-108
Gallagher, Catherine, *Nobody's Story: The Vanishing Acts of Women Writers in the Marketplace, 1670-1820* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994)
Garnai, Amy, *Revolutionary Imaginings in the 1790s: Charlotte Smith, Mary Robinson, Elizabeth Inchbald* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009)
Garside, Peter, James Raven and Rainer Schöwerling, eds., *The English Novel 1770-1829: A Bibliographical Survey of Prose Fiction Published in the British Isles*, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000)
Glover, Susan Paterson, *Engendering Legitimacy: Law, Property, and Early Eighteenth-Century Fiction* (Lewisburg: Buckness University Press, 2006)
Goldberg, Rita, *Sex and Enlightenment: Woman in Richardson and Diderot* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984)
Golden, Morris—
—'Public Context and Imagining Self in *Clarissa', Studies In English Literature*, 25.3 (1985), 575-598
—'Public Context and Imagining Self in "Sir Charles Grandison"', *The Eighteenth Century,* 29.1 (1988), 3-18

Gregory, Philippa, 'The Popular Fiction of the Eighteenth Century Commercial Circulating Libraries', (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1984)
Gwilliam, Tassie, *Samuel Richardson's Fictions of Gender* (Stanford: Standford University Press, 1993)
Henry, Warren, *Gretna Green Romances* (London: Cecil Palmer, 1926)
Heyd, Uriel—
—'News Craze: Public Sphere and the Eighteenth-Century Theatrical Depiction of Newspaper Culture', *The Eighteenth* Century, 56.1 (2015), 59-84
—*Reading Newspapers: press and public in eighteenth-century Britain and America*, SVEC 2012-13 (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2012)
Hilbish, Florence May Anna, *Charlotte Smith, Poet and Novelist (1749-1806): A dissertation* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1941)
Hoeveler, Diane Long, *Gothic Feminism: The Professionalization of Gender from Charlotte Smith to the Brontës* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvanian State University Press, 1998)
Hogle, Jerrold E., ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002)
Hutchinson, Peter Orlando, *Chronicles of Gretna Green*, 2 vols (London: Richard Bentley, 1844)
Jackson, Clare, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), online edition, ed. by David Cannadine, January 2007 <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/17579>
Johnson, Claudia L.—
—*The Cambridge Companion to Mary Wollstonecraft, Cambridge Collections Online* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002)
—*Equivocal Beings: Politics, Gender and Sentimentality in the 1790s: Wollstonecraft, Radcliffe, Burney, Austen* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995)
—*Jane Austen: Women, Politics, and the Novel* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988)
Joule, Victoria, '"Heroines of their own romance": Creative Exchanges between Life Writing and Fiction, the "Scandalous Memoirists" and Charlotte Lennox', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 37.1 (March, 2014), 37-52
Keast, W. R., 'The Two *Clarissas* in Johnson's *Dictionary*', *Studies in Philology*, 54.3 (July, 1957), 429-439
Kelly, Gary, *English Fiction of the Romantic Period 1789-1830* (London: Longman, 1989)
Kelly, James, 'The Abduction of Women of Fortune in Eighteenth-Century Ireland' in *Eighteenth Century Ireland*, 9 (1994), 7-43
Keymer, Tom, *Richardson's Clarissa and the Eighteenth-Century Reader* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992)
Kilgour, Maggie, *The Rise of the Gothic Novel* (London: Routledge, 1995)
King, Kathryn R., *A Political Biography of Eliza Haywood* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2012)

Kinkead-Weeks, Mark, *Samuel Richardson: Dramatic Novelist* (London: Methuen, 1973)
Labbe, Jacqueline, ed., *Charlotte Smith in British Romanticism* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2008)
Ledoux, Ellen Malenas—
—'Defiant Damsels: Gothic Space and Female Agency in *Emmeline*, *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and *Secresy*, *Women's Writing*, 18.3 (2011), 331-347
—*Social Reform in Gothic Writing* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013)
Lemmings, David—
—'Marriage and the Law in the Eighteenth Century: Hardwicke's Marriage Act of 1753', *The Historical Journal*, 39.2 (June, 1996), 339-360
—*The British and their Laws in the Eighteenth Century* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005)
Leneman, Leah, *Promises, Promises: Marriage Litigation in Scotland 1698-1830* (Edinburgh: NMS Enterprises, 2003)
Lipsedge, Karen, 'A Place of Refuge, Seduction or Danger? The Representation of the Ivy Summerhouse in Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa*', *Journal of Design History*, 19.3 (2006), 185-196
Lynch, Deirdre, 'Gothic libraries and national subjects', *Studies in Romanticism*, 40.1 (Spring 2001), 29–48
Macpherson, Sandra, *Harm's Way: Tragic Responsibility and the Novel Form* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010)
McInerney, Timothy, 'The Better Sort: Nobility and Human Variety in Eighteenth-Century Great Britain', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 38.1 (2015), 47-61
McKeon, Michael—
—*The Origins of the English Novel 1600-1740* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987)
—'Review of *Factual Fictions: The Origins of the English Novel* by Lennard J. Davis', *Modern Philology*, 1.82 (August 1984), 76-86
Merritt, Juliette, 'Spying, Writing, Authority: Eliza Haywood's Bath Intrigues', *Studies in Eighteenth Century Culture*, (Johns Hopkins University Press), 30 (2001), 183-199
Moers, Ellen, *Literary Women* (London: Women's Press, 1978; repr. 1986)
Moore, Wendy, *Wedlock: How Georgian Britain's Worst Husband Met his Match* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2009)
Morris, Pam, *Realism*, (London: Routledge, 2003)
Napier, Elizabeth R., 'Sarah Scott', *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, British Novelists: 1660-1800, ed. by Martin C. Battestin, vol 39 (Michigan: Gale Research Company, 1985)
Norton, Rictor, *Mistress of Udolpho: The Life of Ann Radcliffe* (London: Leicester University Press, 1999)
O'Connell, Lisa Marie—
—'Dislocating Literature: The Novel and the Gretna Green Romance, 1770-1850', *Novel: A Forum on Fiction*, 3.1 (Autumn, 2001), 5-23

—*Marriage Acts: The Transformation of Eighteenth-Century British Nuptial Culture* (Providence, Rhode Island: Brown University, 2000)

Oakleaf, David, 'Circulating the Name of a Whore: Eliza Haywood's Betsy Thoughtless, Betty Careless and the Duplicates of the Double Standard', *Women's Writing*, 15.1 (May 2008), 107-134

Oliver, Kathleen M., *Samuel Richardson, Dress, and Discourse* (Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008)

Orr, Leah, 'The Basis for Attribution in the Canon of Eliza Haywood', *The Library: The Transactions of the Bibliographical Society*, 12.4 (December 2011), 335-375

Ostovich, Helen M '"Our Views Must Now Be Different": Imprisonment and Friendship in Clarissa', *Modern Language Quarterly*, 52.2 (1991), 153-169

Outhwaite, R. B., *Clandestine Marriage in England, 1500-1850* (London: Hambledon Press, 1995)

Parrinder, Patrick, 'Highway Robbery and Property Circulation in Eighteenth-Century English Narratives', *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, 13.4 (2001), 509-528

Paul, Nancy, 'Is Sex Necessary? Criminal Conversation and Complicity in Sarah Fielding's *Ophelia*', *Lumen: Selected Proceedings from the Canadian Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 16 (1997), 113-126

Pearson, Jacqueline, *Women's Reading in Britain 1750-1835: A dangerous recreation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999)

Perry, Ruth, 'Sarah Scott', *Orlando: Women's Writing in the British Isles from the Beginnings to the Present*, Susan Brown, Patricia Clements, and Isobel Grundy, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press Online, 2006)

Philips, Nicola, *Women in Business, 1700-1850* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006)

Poovey, Mary, *The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer: Ideology as Style in the Works of Mary Wollstonecraft, Mary Shelley, and Jane Austen* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984)

Preston, John, *The Created Self: The Reader's Role in Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, (London: Heinemann, 1970)

Probert, Rebecca—

—'The Impact of the Marriage Act of 1753: Was it really "A Most Cruel Law for the Fair Sex?", *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 38.2 (Winter, 2005), 247-262

—*Marriage Law and Practice in the Long Eighteenth Century: A Reassessment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009)

Punter, Daivd, 'Fictional Representation of the Law in the Eighteenth Century', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 16.1 (Autumn, 1982), 47-74

Raven, James, *British Fiction 1750-1770: A Chronological Check-list of Prose Fiction Printed in Britain and Ireland* (London: Associated University Presses, 1987)

Ribeiro, Aileen, *The Dress Worn at Masquerades in England, 1730-1790, and its Relation to Fancy Dress in Portraiture* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1984)

Rice, Philip and Patricia Waugh, eds., *Modern Literary Theory*: *A Reader*, 4th ed. (London: Arnold, 2001, rept. 2002)

Richetti, John, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to the Eighteenth Century Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996; repr. 1998)
Rivers, Isabel, ed., *Books and their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England: New Essays*, (London: Leicester University Press, 2001)
Rogers, Deborah D. ed., *The Critical Response to Ann Radcliffe* (London: Greenwood Press, 1994)
Rogers, Katharine M., *Frances Burney: The World of "Female Difficulties"* (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990)
Roper, Derek, *Reviewing before the Edinburgh: 1788-1802* (London: Methuen, 1978)
Sabor, Peter, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Frances Burney*, 1st edn., *Cambridge Companions Online* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007)
Saxton, Kirsten T. and Rebecca P. Bocchicchio, eds., *The Passionate Fictions of Eliza Haywood: Essays on Her Life and Work* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2000)
Schellenberg, Betty A., '"Using Femalities" to "Make Fine Men": Richardson's *Sir Charles Grandison* and the Feminization of Narrative', *Studies in English Language, 1500-1900*, 34.3 (Summer, 1994), 599-616
Schofield, Mary Anne, *Masking and Unmasking the Female Mind: Disguising Romances in Feminine Fiction, 1713-1799* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1990)
Schofield, Mary Anne and Cecilia Macheski, eds., *Fetter'd or Free: British Women Novelists, 1670-1815* (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1986)
Scottish Antiquary, or, Northern Notes and Queries, 8.29 (1893), Edinburgh University Press, 21-24
Sedgwick, Kosofsky Eve, *The Coherence of Gothic Conventions* (London: Methuen, 1976; repr.1986)
Skinner, Gillian, *Sensibility and Economics in the Novel, 1740-1800: The price of a Tear* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1999)
Smith, Meliora C., "Claverhouse", *Irregular Border Marriages* (Edinburgh: Moray Press, 1934)
Sodeman, Melissa, 'Charlotte Smith's Literary Exile', *ELH*, 76.1 (2009), 131-152,
Spacks, Patricia Meyer—
—*Desire and Truth: Functions of Plot in Eighteenth-Century English Novels* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990)
—*Imagining A Self: Autobiography and Novel in Eighteenth-Century England* (London: Harvard University Press, 1976)
—*Selections from 'The Female Spectator'* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999)
Spedding, Patrick, *A Bibliography of Eliza Haywood* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2004)
Spooner, Catherine and Emma McEvoy, eds., *The Routledge Companion to Gothic* (London: Routledge, 2007)
St. Clair, William, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004; rept, 2005)

Stoler, John Andrew, *Ann Radcliffe: The Novel of Suspense and Terror* (New York: Arno Press, 1980)
Stone, Lawrence—
—*The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1977; abridged and rev. ed., 1979)
—*Road to Divorce: England 1530-1987, Oxford Scholarship Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990)
—*Uncertain Unions: Marriage in England 1660-1753* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992)
Stott, Anne—
—*Hannah More: The First Victorian, Oxford Scholarship Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990)
—*Wilberforce: Family and Friends, Oxford Scholarship Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012)
Straub, Kristina, *Divided Fictions: Fanny Burney and Feminine Strategy* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1987)
Stuber, Florian 'Clarissa: A Religious Novel?', *Studies In The Literary Imagination*, 28.1 (1995), 105-124
Swan, Beth, *Fictions of Law: An Investigation of the Law in Eighteenth-Century English Fiction* (New York: Peter Lang, 1997)
Tegan, Mary Beth, 'Mocking the Mothers of the Novel: Mary Wollstonecraft, Maternal Metaphor, and the Reproduction of Sympathy', *Studies in the Novel*, 42.4 (December, 2010), 357-376
Todd, Janet, *The Sign of Angellica: Women, Writing and Fiction 1600-1800* (London: Virago, 1989)
Tomkins, J. M. S., *The Popular Novel in England 1770-1800* (London: Methuen, 1932)
Tracey, Ann B., *The Gothic Novel 1790-1830: Plot Summaries and Index to Motifs* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1981)
Treherne, John, *The Canning Enigma* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1989)
Turner, Cheryl, *Living By The Pen: Women Writers in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 1992)
Ty, Eleanor, *Unsex'd Revolutionaries: Five Women Novelists of the 1790s* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993)
Underwood, Doug, *Journalism and the Novel: Truth and Fiction 1700-2000* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008)
Vermillion Mary, 'Clarissa and the Marriage Act', *Eighteenth Century Fiction*, 9.4 (July, 1997), 395-414
Wagner, Ann K., 'Sexual Assault in the Shadow of the Law: Character and Proof in Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa*', *Law & Literature*, 25:2 (2013), 311-326
Warner, William B.—
—*Licensing Entertainment: The Elevation of Novel Reading in Britain: 1684-1750* (London: University of California Press, 1998)
—*Reading "Clarissa": The Struggles of Interpretation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979)

Watt, Ian, *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1957, repr. London: Pimlico, 2000)

Woodward, Carolyn, 'Naming Names in Mid-eighteenth-century Feminist Theory', *Women's Writing*, 1.3 (1994), 291-316

Wright, Angela, 'The Fickle Fortunes of Chivalry in Eighteenth-Century Gothic' in *Gothic Studies*, 14.1 (Manchester University Press, 2012), 47-56

Wright, Lynn Marie and Donald J. Newman, eds., *Fair Philosopher: Eliza Haywood* '*The Female Spectator*' (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2006)

Wyett, Jodi Leigh, *Reading Women: Female Novelists, Female Readers, 1751-1818,* Thesis Order No. 9933028 (Wayne State University, 1999)

Zomchick, John P., *Family and the law in eighteenth-century fiction: The public conscience in the private sphere* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993)